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ITALY'S RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND
1896-1905

SERIES LII

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THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Political Economy, and Political Science

ITALY'S RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND
1896-1905

By

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"Men at some time are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

PREFACE

During the years between the battle of Adowa and the landing of William II at Tangier, Italian foreign policy became clearer in its main outlines than it had been. Changing diplomatic alignments in Europe created a fairer field for the diplomats who served the house of Savoy to find themselves, and to act more freely in accordance with Italian desires and aspirations. Their sphere of activity was in the Mediterranean and one phase of their action involved the interests of England in this artery of her empire. The new initiatives of Italian diplomacy after 1896, and the measures and changes of opinion by which England adapted herself to them, form the theme of the following pages.

Many obligations are to be acknowledged. The late Professor E. R. Turner suggested the theme and Professor Kent Roberts Greenfield encouraged its development. Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes directed attention to the factor of public opinion. Personal indebtedness to the late Professor John H. Latané, Dr. William S. Holt, Dr. Frederick C. Lane, and Dr. Charles C. Tansill as well as to the keen criticism of the Johns Hopkins seminary in European History has been incurred. Library staffs at the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, Yale, Harvard, Clark, and the Johns Hopkins Universities have been helpful. It is to be hoped that in some way the merit, if any, of this work will repay them.

J. L. G.

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ITALY'S RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND

1896-1905

CHAPTER I

THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

During the generation which preceded the Morocco crisis of 1905 the main problems of European diplomacy had their geographical setting in the Mediterranean Basin. It is true that issues existed along the Rhine and the Vistula. But these were local in character and in no way assumed the world-wide importance of the area having as its nucleus the sun-kissed shores of what the Italians call "*mare nostrum*."

In the closing years of the nineteenth century this region could no longer be envisaged as including solely the territories immediately bathed by the waters of the most historic of all seas. Due to nationalistic and imperialistic aspirations of the Europeans of the late Victorian Age and to the epoch-making fact of the Suez Canal, the sphere of conflicting interests called the Mediterranean Basin had assumed an imperial spread. Its northern boundary followed the Pyrenees, Alps and the Danube till it reached the point where the Caucasus mountains dip into the Black Sea. Its eastern line hovered over the mountains of Armenia, the highlands of Syria and Palestine and thence swung southeastwardly along the Arabian shores of the Red Sea to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, wavering uncertainly towards the Persian Gulf. On the south it tended to include the indefinite territories of Egypt and the Sultan of Zanzibar. Further west and still to the south it enveloped the vast and ill-defined hinterlands of Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco. Here Cape Guardafui, Kismayu, Lakes Albert and Victoria Nyanza and Lake Tchad were linked by imperialistic desires with Gibraltar and the more closely girt regions of the north, as if to indicate a natural unity which the deeds of man had

not yet vouchsafed them. Such was the area in which the interests of England and Italy mainly met during the period from 1896 to 1905.¹

England's stake in the Mediterranean Basin had steadily increased during the entire nineteenth century. The development of steam navigation and the rise of the Eastern Question,² and the quickened step of her rivals—France and Russia³—gave constant impulse to the formation of a line of defense on the road to India. By 1896 Cyprus, Egypt, Zeila, Berbera and the Suez Canal constituted new and shining links in a chain extending from Malta to Aden. Predominant commercial and financial interests in Turkey and its environs increased the attraction.⁴ At the same time liberal and humanitarian sentiment coupled with treaty obligations formed a most pleasing façade for the constant interference and interest of the practical and legally minded Englishman.⁵

The magnitude of these interests complicated the problem of defense. Turkey was decadent, Italy was weak, and Austria-Hungary was torn by internal dissension. These possible friends were consequently of insufficient strength to provide against any hostile combination threatening Gibraltar, Malta and Suez.⁶ In the south the unoccupied Sudan was a key to a timorously held Egypt which might be picked up by a strong rival.⁷ Obviously all of Britain's growing navy could not be concentrated between Malta and Suez.⁸

¹ This conception of the Mediterranean Basin grew out of the study carried on in preparation of this work. It does not vary much from the conception reached by Ellen Churchill Semple, *The Geography of the Mediterranean Region*, ch. i.

² See Halford L. Hoskins, *British Routes to India*.

³ See Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch, *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, III, 135, 156-158, 163-176.

⁴ Edward M. Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers and the Bagdad Railway*, pp. 11, 29, 30, 104; George L. Beer, *African Questions at the Peace Conference*, pp. 385 ff.

⁵ Earle, as cited in note 4.

⁶ For a description of the problem of imperial defense, see Sir Charles Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain*, 4th edition, pp. 300, 384, 357.

⁷ The Marchand expedition illustrates this danger. See Morrison B. Giffen, *Fashoda*.

⁸ The "common envy" which England's possessions aroused made this concentration impossible.

Under such circumstances the natural policy for British statesmen to maintain was that of the *status quo*.⁹ Lord Salisbury might at times toy with the idea that Turkey could be divided,¹⁰ be reluctant to assume the rôle of a public defender of her integrity,¹¹ and confess that England had put her money on the wrong horse,¹² but in general he and his political rivals adhered to the idea of maintaining existing conditions.¹³

During the same period French ambitions and expansion had developed greatly. Algeria quietly acquired after 1830 and Obock occupied in 1862 formed springboards to Tunis and French Somaliland. In 1896 it seemed that the Congo and Abyssinia might serve the same purposes towards the Sudan.¹⁴ The vast hinterlands of Tunis and Algeria invited an expansion which could easily spread fanlike to involve Egypt, Tripoli and Morocco.¹⁵ Strong material interests in the Ottoman Empire,¹⁶ as well as her historic traditions in the Levant,¹⁷ furnished a compelling motive towards sustained activity.

Unlike England, aggressiveness was the key to France's policy in the Mediterranean Basin. She was inferior to England in the strength of her navy and general resources. Thanks to the alliance with Russia she was not isolated. Apparently her plans involved the linking up of her African possessions in a vast land empire which would threaten the position of England.¹⁸ On the sea France and her ally,

⁹ An official statement of this policy may be found in Alfred Francis Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary*, I, 94-103, 123-133.

¹⁰ Hatzfeldt to Holstein, July 30, 1895, *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, X, 9-10. Cited hereafter as G. P.

¹¹ Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, February 8, 1896, *ibid.*, XI, 99-102.

¹² *Parliamentary Debates (Series IV)*, XLV, 29.

¹³ Alfred G. Gardiner, *The Life of Sir William Harcourt*, II, 328; George P. Gooch and Harold W. V. Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the World War*, I, 282. Cited as B. D.

¹⁴ Giffen, pp. 13-15; Parker T. Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*, p. 141.

¹⁵ Moon, p. 140.

¹⁶ Earle, pp. 30, 153-154.

¹⁷ René Pinon, *L'empire de la Méditerranée*, pp. 20-23.

¹⁸ Notes 14 and 15. See also William L. Langer, *The Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 72, 317-319.

despite their lack of harmony concerning policies in the Near East,¹⁹ constituted a potential menace to British control of the Mediterranean.²⁰

Italian interests in the Mediterranean Basin were much more fundamental. Her commerce for the most part went by sea.²¹ Her northern plain had been a battleground for centuries and Sicily placed her athwart all that went on in the Mediterranean.²² Tunis and Corsica were in French hands, and Italy's low lying Adriatic coast was open to an attack from any strong naval power possessing the opposite side.²³ Her railways were vulnerable to an attack from the sea. Suez, Gibraltar, and the Straits, the keys to "mare nostrum," were in the hands of England and Turkey. In Malta, Austria-Hungary and Tunis lived many Italians under alien flags, and with a constantly expanding population and industry, she saw that only Tripoli and Morocco were not pre-empted by other great European powers.²⁴

Under such circumstances expansionist ambitions were natural. From the days of the Risorgimento Italian eyes had been turned southward.²⁵ One of the motives to unification had been the conviction of a group of her leaders that Italians could fulfill their destiny only if they were organized to play a part in the reanimated activities of the Mediterranean.²⁶

¹⁹ Henri Hauser, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe*, I, 430-431.

²⁰ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 340, 400.

²¹ One indication of the coasting trade's importance is the persistence of sailing ship construction for the use of the Italian merchant marine. See Giovanni Boncsigli, *L'industria dei trasporti marittimi*, p. 33, in *Cinquant'anni di storia italiana*, I.

²² Gaetano Salvemini, "La politica estera della Destra, 1871-1876," *Rivista d'Italia*, XXVII (1924), 345 ff.

²³ There are no harbors except Venice and hence no good naval bases on the Italian side of the Adriatic.

²⁴ See Robert Michels, *Italian von Heute*, p. 107, and Francesco Coletti, *Dell'emigrazione italiana*, pp. 80-82 in *Cinquant'anni di storia italiana*, III, for figures on Italians resident abroad. The general features of the expansion of industry, commerce and emigration may be found in Bonaldo Stringher, *Gli scambi con l'estero e la politica commerciale italiana dal 1860 al 1910*, ch. x, in the same volume. The best book in English on Italian emigration is Robert M. Foerster, *Italian Emigration of our Times*.

²⁵ Both Cesare Balbo and Giuseppe Mazzini had such ambitions. Sir Thomas Barclay, *The Turco-Italian War*, p. 52.

²⁶ Kent Roberts Greenfield, "Economic Ideas and Facts of the

After unification her maritime needs, excess population, desire for markets, historic memories and emulation of others turned her efforts towards the acquisition of colonies.²⁷ By 1896 Eritrea, a lease on four ports of the Benadir, and protectorates over tribes along the coast northeast of Kismayu were the definite results. Francesco Crispi, then in his last ministry, still adhered to the plan of enforcing a protectorate over Abyssinia.²⁸ His soulful but indiscreet eyes were fixed on Tripoli, Morocco and the Eastern Sudan.²⁹ Thus there existed the possibility that should Italian resources and will suffice a great colonial empire extending from Eritrea to include Tripoli, Abyssinia and Somaliland might be created.³⁰

But Italy was not ready for such an ambitious program. Her foreign trade was small.³¹ She was still a heavy borrower abroad.³² Her emigrants preferred North and South America to the hardships of Africa.³³ In wealth and resources she was the weakest of the six great powers of Europe.³⁴ Conse-

Early Period of the Risorgimento," *American Historical Review*, VIII (1930), 31-43.

²⁷ Gennaro Mondaini, *Manuale di storia e legislazione coloniale del regno d'Italia*, part 1, pp. 20-21.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

²⁹ T. Palamenghi-Criepi, *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, translated by Mary Prichard Agnetti, III, ch. ii; *ibid.*, pp. 82-83. Cited as Crispi. Bülow to Caprivi. February 28, 1894, G. P., VIII, 326-328; T. Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, pp. 150-151, footnote.

³⁰ One cannot say that this dream was a carefully formulated plan on the part of the Italian authorities. Crispi's biographer speaks scornfully of Mancini's idea that the keys to the Mediterranean might be found in the Red Sea and contends that Crispi's program in Eritrea was limited to the tapping of the Sudan trade by reaching the Athara. See *ibid.*, pp. 93, 143-144. The idea is described by the well informed author of articles on diplomatic and colonial matters in the *Nuova antologia* as follows:

"... quando la presa di Cassala, e la conseguente stanza presa dall'Italia nel Sudan, parvero dar base pratica, in un più o meno prossimo avvenire, al magnifico ideale di una grande colonia africana dell'Italia, la quale, partendo dalla Cirenaica, scendesse al Sudan appunto, e attraverso all'Etiopia-compresa tutta allora nella sfera d'influenza italiana-andasse a far capo all'allora costituenda colonia nostra del Benadir, cioè nell'Oceano Indiano." "XXX," "Tripoli," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXVII (1905), 343-344.

³¹ Stringher, pp. 34, 53.

³² Francesco Nitti, *Il Capitale straniero in Italia*, pp. 71-73.

³³ Coletti, p. 61.

³⁴ Nitti, *The Wealth of Italy*, p. 48; Michels, p. 93.

quently her policy gravitated towards that of the *status quo* so long as her ambitions were not threatened. In fact she generally stood half in hope and half in fear that existing territorial arrangements in Africa and the Adriatic might be altered.

Spain was practically out of the picture in 1896. Expansion was beyond her powers, but she clung tenaciously to her dreams in Morocco.³⁵

Among the powers not holding territorial possessions on the coasts of the Mediterranean Russia was the most important. Her desires for a warm water outlet and for closer ties with fellow Slav Christians in the Balkans, and her rank as a great power constituted sensitive antennae alertly turned in this direction.³⁶ But in the last decade of the last century her attention was more and more being directed towards the Far East,³⁷ although the eastern portions of the Mediterranean were not forgotten.³⁸ Her nationals aided the French in Abyssinia and her Egyptian policy paralleled that of the French.³⁹

Austria-Hungary's interests lay in the Balkans. The Adriatic, the Danube and the valleys to her southeast formed strategic highways to the outside world. The polyglot character of her empire made Italian Irredentism and Russian Pan-Slavism matters of constant concern. To her, consequently, the domination of the Balkan regions which looked towards the setting sun was a matter of life and death.⁴⁰

Still her situation was not alarming in 1896. Her gains from the Treaty of Berlin, her alliances with Italy and Germany, and the yet unexpired understanding with England made her position fairly secure. Internal strife forbade ag-

³⁵ Eugene N. Anderson, *The First Moroccan Crisis, 1904-1906*, p. 36.

³⁶ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 275-284; Baron S. A. Korff, *Russia's Foreign Relations during the Last Half Century*.

³⁷ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 400 ff.; Hauser, I, 430-437.

³⁸ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, p. 400.

³⁹ Giffen, pp. 163-164.

⁴⁰ Joseph Redlich, *Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria*, pp. 387 ff., 497.

gression and while Russia's satisfactory preoccupation with the Far East continued she was content to wait watchfully.⁴¹

German interests in the Mediterranean Basin were primarily those of her allies, Austria-Hungary and Italy. Treaty pledges and interest inclined her to defend Italy from French attack.⁴² Similar ties connected her with Austria-Hungary against Russia.⁴³ She disclaimed active political interest in questions of the Mediterranean,⁴⁴ but economic interests which pulled her into Turkey⁴⁵ made such a policy more difficult as the years went by.

Turkey's existence as an imperial domain was at stake. Her integrity was a legal fiction. Egypt was hers only nominally and she could not defend the boundaries she claimed for Tripoli. Her control over the non-Christian sections of the Asiatic portions of her empire was titular in character. Maturing national consciousness in the Balkan peninsula pointed towards her elimination as a European power. Her finances, business structure and system of law were under foreign control.⁴⁶ Her main hope lay in the possible quarrels of her enemies and in the supreme dilatoriness and shrewdness of Abdul Hamid.⁴⁷

Such then were the leading material interests of the great powers of Europe in the Mediterranean Basin in the last decade of the nineteenth century. But the policies of no great power can be explained adequately by a simple consideration of hedonistic tendencies. Possession of certain places and pursuit of defensive and aggressive schemes vary

⁴¹ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, p. 8; Heinrich Friedjung, *Das Zeitalter des Imperialismus*, I, 341 ff.

⁴² Pribram, I, 104-115; Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 319-321.

⁴³ Pribram, I, 18-31.

⁴⁴ Erich von Brandenburg, *From Bismarck to the World War*, translated by A. E. Adams, p. 14; Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 366-371; Bülow to Kaiser Wilhelm II, April 21, 1898, G. P., XII, 496-497.

⁴⁵ Earle, ch. iii; Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 372-373.

⁴⁶ Earle, ch. ii; Crispien, III, 46-48.

⁴⁷ "His Majesty [the Sultan] is essentially an opportunist, and is content that political interests shall be settled *de jour au jour*, as events occur." Annual Report for Turkey for 1907, B. D., V, 44.

in appeal so much that mathematical calculation of results is impossible. Also every power—and this is especially true of England and Italy—in its foreign policy is governed largely by the condition of its relations to other powers and the warp and woof of an experience spun from facts and ideas of the past and present. It is then to the diplomatic background and the state of public opinion that we must further turn for guidance through the labyrinth of Anglo-Italian relations from 1896 to 1905.

CHAPTER II

THE DIPLOMATIC BACKGROUND

In pursuit of their various aims both in the Mediterranean Basin and in the broader arenas of *Weltpolitik*,¹ the various European powers did not rely upon their unaided efforts. Organization, cooperation and competition are perhaps the most notable results of the intricate complexity of modern life, and the diplomats of Europe responded vigorously if not always wisely to the voices of the hour which they never seemed quite able to understand and master. Accordingly under the pressure of financial and industrial interests, the constant barking of nationalistic opinion, the fears inherited from centuries of experience and the shrewd prodding of not too unselfish armament interests, and obsessed by the phantom idea of a possible balance of power, European statesmen after 1878 began to replace the temporary alliances of earlier years with a system of more or less permanent alignments and groupings which most historians have recognized as one of the leading causes of the World War.² By 1896 this system had not assumed its final and fatal shape, but Italy was already fully involved in the network while England was being drawn in by apparently irresistible forces. A description of this network is therefore indispensable to an understanding of the problem of Anglo-Italian relations.

Alliances were not innovations in European diplomacy prior to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Romans and Greeks had used them, and the Italian cities of the

¹ Here one finds the whole series of national and imperial questions: Africa, Middle and Far East, Alsace Lorraine, etc. Inasmuch as the essential problem involved in the present work is found in the Mediterranean no attempt has been made to describe the worldwide interests of the powers.

² Sidney B. Fay, *Origins of the World War*, I, 34; Hauser, II, 366. " . . . : it was the tradition of the balance of power, which had found expression in the creation, development and conflict of two great diplomatic groups, the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente." Bernadotte Schmitt, *The Coming of the War*, I, 8.

Renaissance had furnished models for the monarchs and their ministers to follow. But prior to the coming of Bismarck they had been temporary and for the most part local in character. This great technician and statesman made an art if not an exact science of the matter. Emulators copied in outward detail but missed the heart of his system which aimed at a series of defensive checks and balances to protect "the German Empire from any conceivable attack so far as human foresight and ingenuity could do so."³

Viewed thus, understanding of his system is comparatively simple. In 1879 the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary provided for German aid to the latter in case of an attack by Russia and Austrian assistance to the former in case of aggression on the part of Russia or of both France and Russia.⁴ In 1882 Italy had been driven to form an alliance with these two powers by a resurgence of the Roman question.⁵ As renewed in 1891 and as existing in 1896 the Triple Alliance provided for common action of Germany and Italy against France and of all three in case of a hostile coalition. Germany and Italy agreed likewise to guarantee the *status quo* in the Near East and to forestall any injurious territorial modifications in the Ottoman coasts and islands of the Adriatic and Aegean Seas. Austria-Hungary and Italy arranged that each should consult the other on the basis of reciprocal compensation in case of a change of the *status quo* in the Balkans or Ottoman coasts and islands. Germany had given a separate pledge of limited support to Italy in case France became aggressive in North Africa.⁶

Supplemental understandings in 1882 and 1887 gave Bismarck a key position in European politics.⁷ But after his fall from office in 1890 the Franco-Russian Alliance altered the

³ William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, 1871-1890, p. 505.

⁴ Pribram, I, 24-31.

⁵ Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, 1871-1890, ch. vii, p. 472.

⁶ Pribram, I, 150-163.

⁷ For the Mediterranean agreements of 1887 see below, p. 19.

balance. Each contracting party promised aid to the other in case of any attack on the other either by Germany or by any member of the Triple Alliance aided by Germany. Both were to mobilize in case of mobilization by any member of the Triple Alliance.⁸ Textually the wording of the agreement pointed at Germany, but during its early years it worked more to the detriment of England than of any other European power.⁹

The reasons for Bismarck's control, however, can be found in the supplemental agreements just referred to which formed a part of his system. This master statesman always liked to have other countries do his work. Consequently, in 1887 when the European horizon was clouded by the rise of Boulanger in France, by Bulgaria's independent attitude towards Russia and by a tariff war between France and Italy,¹⁰ he had given the finishing touches by promoting note exchanges between Austria-Hungary, England, Italy and Spain. In February and March 1887 the first three pledged themselves to maintain the *status quo* in the Adriatic, Aegean and Black Seas as well as in the Mediterranean.¹¹ England's pledge to support Italy in North Africa in case of French encroachment and Italy's readiness to support England in Egypt gave an Anglo-Italian cast to this understanding.¹² In December the same parties concurred in agreeing to support the treaty *status quo* and independence of Turkey. They specifically agreed that their protégé should not be permitted to change the status of Bulgaria or alienate any portion of Asia Minor. Violations on her part were to be considered sufficient ground for temporary territorial occupation by the parties adhering.¹³ Spain was forced to isolation or acquiescence. Choosing the latter she agreed with Italy that neither would aid France in

⁸ Documents diplomatiques, livre jaune, l'alliance franco-russe, p. 92, especially.

⁹ Langer, The Franco-Russian Alliance, chs. xii, xiii.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 22-24, 93. See also his European Alliances and Alignments, ch. xii.

¹¹ Pribram, I, 94-103.

¹² Ibid.; Langer, Franco-Russian Alliance, pp. 22-24.

¹³ Pribram, I, 124-133.

North Africa and each promised the other communication in case the Mediterranean *status quo* were threatened.¹⁴

The alliances and Mediterranean Agreements of Bismarck were still nominally in effect at the beginning of 1896.¹⁵ But the intervening years had so weakened the ties produced by the crises of 1885-1887 that the bases of the Mediterranean concert were undermined. In the course of an attempt to maintain friendship with Russia after 1894 the German government became less friendly towards England. In 1895 it joined the opposition to her in settling the Sino-Japanese war.¹⁶ German and Italian statesmen became distrustful when England adopted a yielding policy in the Siamese crisis of 1893.¹⁷ Francophobia was proving disastrous to Italian economic life and to her colonial dreams.¹⁸ Early in 1896 Austria-Hungary became dissatisfied with England's failure to increase her obligations under the understandings of 1887,¹⁹ which had laid down no definite procedure by which England was bound to act, and was showing herself ready to meet Russia halfway.²⁰ On the other hand the British government was seeking a workable compromise with France and Russia,²¹ and Lord Salisbury was getting ready to confess that England had backed the wrong horse in her Turkish policy.²² Thus in 1896 the main bond of the Mediterranean concert, opposition to France and Russia, was being threat-

¹⁴ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, p. 96; Pribram, I, 116-123.

¹⁵ The Italo-Spanish-Austrian agreement had lapsed in 1895, but neither Austria-Hungary nor Italy had denounced the agreements with England. See B. D., VIII, 18 and Sanderson's memo., July 1, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 6. In 1899 Admiral Canevaro complained that England had violated them by coming to an agreement with France over North Africa and the Sudan. Saurma to Hohenlohe, March 29, 1899, G. P., XIV, 430-431.

¹⁶ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 365-366, 391, 402-403.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-332, 391; Solms-Sonnenwalde to Caprivi, August 1, 1893, G. P., VIII, 112-113.

¹⁸ Michels, p. 59; T. Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, pp. 162-165.

¹⁹ Eulenberg to Foreign Office, February 24, 1896, G. P., XI, 105-106.

²⁰ Friedjung, *Das Zeitalter des Imperialismus*, I, 341.

²¹ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 410-412.

²² *Parliamentary Debates* (Series IV), XLV, 29.

ened in all directions. Future events were to show that despite the fact that the British considered the 1887 agreements still binding,²³ and while Italy continued to rely upon England in accordance with their general spirit,²⁴ cooperation between England and the Triple Alliance was practically at an end.²⁵

At the same time nine years of experience had revealed the inherent weaknesses of the Anglo-Italian combination. Despite the utility of Italian naval bases to England,²⁶ the union was an ill-assorted one. Italy's weak navy and long coast line made her a liability rather than an asset.²⁷ A rich strong England could have little in common with a poor backward Italy,²⁸ where sectionalism was rife,²⁹ ministries changed overnight,³⁰ and where social and religious differences threatened the existence of the régime in power.³¹ It was natural also that sanguine Italian statesmen should expect much from an association with England,³² more in fact than any British statesman with a due regard for realities could readily grant.

Dissatisfaction with the agreements³³ was principally on the Italian side and took the form of disappointment over their failure to assume a more definite and binding form. During the preliminary negotiations Count Corti, Italian foreign minister, had proposed that "if either Power was at war

²³ Bertie's memo., November 9, 1901, B. D., II, 76; Lansdowne's memo., November 11, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁴ See chs. iv and v.

²⁵ Exception must be made of the Fashoda Crisis and its foreshadowings.

²⁶ Sir Charles Dilke, "The Naval Weakness of Great Britain," *Cassier's Magazine*, XII (1897), 435; Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain*, fourth edition, p. 687.

²⁷ First reference cited in preceding note.

²⁸ See Francesco Nitti, *The Wealth of Italy*.

²⁹ John Buchan, *Nations of Today*, Italy, p. 136; Michels, pp. 43-49.

³⁰ From 1878 to 1900 there were twenty-one ministries in twenty-two years. Sidney Sonnino, "Quid Agendum," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXIX (1900), 343.

³¹ H. Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, I, 110; William J. Stillman, *Autobiography of a Journalist*, II, 711; William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890*, pp. 232-233.

³² See ch. vi, and below, pp. 22, 25.

³³ Especially those of February-March 1887.

with France, the other Power would give it naval assistance."³⁴ Lord Salisbury apparently feared that Italy would take advantage of such a provision to provoke a war with France,³⁵ and while willing to go as far as "the Parliamentary character of our institutions will permit,"³⁶ the final agreement left the British government practically free to determine the degree of its cooperation with Italy in the Mediterranean and in Africa.³⁷ To change this situation both Crispi and Rudini bent their best efforts.

Despite all that they could do they found the task a thankless and useless one. In 1888 Crispi thought that he had succeeded where Corti had failed. But all the evidence points to the fact that his boasted pledge of British naval assistance was limited to one special case and time, and carried with it no promise for the future.³⁸ Articles IX and X and the protocol to the Triple Alliance renewal of 1891 looked to the accession of England as co-guarantor of German pledges in North Africa.³⁹ Rudini would probably have been willing to accept a separate British promise to that effect, but his indiscreet utterances aroused a parliamentary storm in England which ruined the slim chances he may have possessed.⁴⁰ Lord Rosebery succeeded Lord Salisbury as foreign secretary in 1892, but due to the opposition of Prime Minister Gladstone and Chancellor of the Exchequer Harcourt he would do no more than renew the pledges of 1887 and state "that the English cabinet could not regard with indifference the defeat of Italy by France."⁴¹ And in the encroaching twilight of Crispi's political career, Lord Salisbury refused any conces-

³⁴ George E. Buckle, *Letters of Queen Victoria* (Series III), I, 268.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 269. For the persistence of this idea, see Dufferin to Rosebery, November 3, 1893, B. D., II, 286-287.

³⁶ Buckle, I, 272.

³⁷ Pribram, I, 96.

³⁸ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 161 ff.

³⁹ Pribram, I, 157-162.

⁴⁰ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 162 ff.

⁴¹ Quoted by Langer, in *Franco-Russian Alliance*, p. 371; also see Gardiner, II, chs. xii, xiii.

sions which would satisfy the Italian wish for a more binding agreement.⁴²

The British government was more conciliatory in the regions in Africa claimed by the Sultan of Zanzibar and the Khedive of Egypt which after 1884 began to pass into the hands of various European powers.⁴³ Here the British preferred a limited Italian occupation to the neighborhood of France. But British benevolence was negative, not positive. To this extent, then, it did not meet Italian needs, nor did it suffice to prevent diplomatic defeats.

Anglo-Italian cooperation in Northeast Africa began at Massowa in 1885.⁴⁴ Due to the fear of French aggression which was held by British representatives in Egypt Lord Granville sanctioned an Italian occupation.⁴⁵ King John of Abyssinia, who had been promised Massowa under the Hewitt treaty of 1884,⁴⁶ became resentful and Sir Gerald Portal represented the British government in an effort to soothe his injured feelings.⁴⁷ Italian expansion westward in Eritrea during 1890 produced a long series of negotiations with England which resulted in Italy being assigned the territory in Northeast Africa east of a line drawn south from Ras Kasar on the Red Sea to the mouth of the Juba, thus giving her almost all of present-day Eritrea, Abyssinia and Italian Somaliland.⁴⁸ In 1894 when competition over Central Africa was rife among the powers,⁴⁹ England and Italy came to an agreement which explicitly recognized the rights of Italy over

⁴² Bülow to Foreign Office, November 21, 1895. G. P., X, 211-212; Bülow to Hohenlohe, February 18, 1896, G. P., XI, 103-104; Lord Lansdowne's memo., November 11, 1901, B. D., II, 78.

⁴³ For definite statement of the limits see Major Francis R. Win-gate, *Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan*, p. 529, and Moon, p. 122.

⁴⁴ Italy had refused to help England in Egypt in 1882 in the hope of conciliating France. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments*, 1871-1890, p. 275.

⁴⁵ Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, II, 437-439; Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, II, 57; Mondaini, part 1, p. 37.

⁴⁶ British and Foreign State Papers, LXXV, 620-621.

⁴⁷ Saverio Cilibrizzi, *Storia parlamentare, politica e diplomatica d'Italia*, II, 516.

⁴⁸ Sir Edward Hertslet, *Map of Africa by Treaty*, III (1909), 948-950.

⁴⁹ Gardiner, II, 312.

Abyssinia,⁵⁰ and which covered the details of a concession to cross the border from British Somaliland into Harrar.⁵¹ British cooperation rounded itself out territorially by assisting the Italians in securing a lease on four ports of the Benadir from the Sultan of Zanzibar.⁵² Thus Italy with the acquiescence of England was able to mark out on the charts of the early nineties the eastern half of her dream just taking shape.⁵³

The path of Anglo-Italian cooperation, however, was not all roses from 1885 to 1896. Guarding warily against a possible threat to the Sudan in 1885, Lord Granville refused to allow the Italians to relieve Kassala which was then being besieged by the Mahdi.⁵⁴ Five years later Crispi viewed the place with a longing eye and Lord Cromer drew rein firmly with a demand that in case Italy should be compelled to occupy its sun-baked square the Italians must give a pledge of its eventual restoration to Egypt.⁵⁵ This demand came as a climax to growing British suspicion of Italian activities in Western Eritrea.⁵⁶ Negotiations were suspended on the matter of delimiting spheres of influence between England and Italy in Northeast Africa until Crispi fell early in 1891. Rudinì, who succeeded Crispi, restored good feeling by conceding Kismayu and the demand which Cromer had made with respect to Kassala.⁵⁷

The return of Crispi to office in 1893 coincided with a re-

⁵⁰ Carlo Rossetti, *Storia diplomatica della Etiopia durante il regno di Menelik II*, pp. 133-134.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* For the boundary see Hertslet, 1894 edition, II, 670.

⁵² Sir James Rennell Rodd, *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (Series I), 308.

⁵³ See above, p. 13.

⁵⁴ Fitzmaurice, II, 437-439.

⁵⁵ General Luchino dal Verme, "L'Italia nel libro di Lord Cromer," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXXXVII (1908), 374-376; Gaetano Salvemini, *La politica estera di Francesco Crispi*, pp. 74-75; Francesco Crispi, *La prima guerra d'Africa*, pp. 225-245.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 227; Sir Alfred Lyall, *Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava*, II, 233; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 26, 1890, G. P., VIII, 343-344.

⁵⁷ Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, p. 161; Lady Gwendolyn Cecil, *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, IV, 334; Hertslet, III (1909), 948-950.

vival of British suspicions. His restless attack upon Kassala in 1894 aroused Lord Kimberley to exclaim that he could not believe it.⁵⁸ Italian assurances that Rudini's pledge of 1891 would be kept were promptly given.⁵⁹ But due to the distrust aroused and to the importance of Zeila to India both he and Lord Salisbury refused to cede Zeila, the key to Harrar and the control of Menelik II, to Italy, thus disappointing the Italians who had desired to acquire it ever since their entrance into Abyssinian affairs.⁶⁰

Italian and British officials also disagreed about more serious things than the cession of Zeila and Kassala between 1890 and 1896. In the first year Lord Salisbury ignored Italian protests against the fortification by France of Biserta,⁶¹ refused to sanction an Italian occupation of Tripoli,⁶² and wounded Italian susceptibilities in the direction of Lake Tchad by conceding the "light land" of the Sahara to France.⁶³ Despite the pressing danger to both countries' interests in Africa and a studied politeness on the part of the British authorities, plans for joint action of the two against the raging dervishes of the Sudan did not reach fruition while Italy's affairs were directed by the colonially minded Crispi.⁶⁴ In 1894 Lord Kimberley would not commit himself to a program of opposition to the French in Morocco.⁶⁵ And as the day of Italian disaster at Adowa approached Lord Salisbury

⁵⁸ Metternich to Hohenlohe, March 12, 1896, G. P., XI, 164.

⁵⁹ Blanc to Tornielli, July 19, 1894, Documenti diplomatici, No. 86, pp. 45-46. Cited hereafter by D. D. and number.

⁶⁰ On this complicated series of negotiations see Mondaini, part 1, p. 101; Francesco Crispi, *La prima guerra d'Africa*, p. 91; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, January 30, 1895, January 31, 1895, G. P., VIII, 389-391; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, February 7, 1895, *ibid.*, p. 392; Hatzfeldt to Holstein, July 30, 1895, G. P., X, 9-13; Bülow to Hohenlohe, January 4, 1895, G. P., VIII, 378-379; Bülow to Hohenlohe, January 13, 1895, *ibid.*, pp. 381-383.

⁶¹ Crispi, III, ch. iii.

⁶² Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, July 18, 1890, G. P., VIII, 250.

⁶³ Hatzfeldt to Caprivi, August 29, 1890, *ibid.*, p. 351. The phrase quoted is from Cecil, IV, 324.

⁶⁴ Bülow to Caprivi, April 24, 1894, G. P., VIII, 362; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 8, 1896, G. P., XI, 240; Francesco Crispi, *La prima guerra d'Africa*, pp. 280-283, 310-320.

⁶⁵ Blanc to Ford, November 30, 1894, G. P., VIII, 334-336.

aroused Italian ire by the suggestion that Paris should be approached on the matter of using Zeila as a base of operations against Emperor Menelik.⁶⁵ The effect of this refusal was aggravated by the fact that it coincided with an agreement on the part of Salisbury that he would negotiate concerning a revision of the British position in Tunis at the same time that the Bey's denunciation of Italy's treaty of 1868 made the latter face the possibility of losing the remnant of her rights there to France.⁶⁷

These events of the early nineties thus profoundly altered the situation which had prevailed in 1887. Italy had come at that time to rely upon the friendship of England on the sea and in Africa in the same way that she did upon her two legal allies on land. This naturally implied agreement between her two allies and England. By 1896 their friendship was perceptibly colder and its rupture was revealed when Emperor William sent his famous telegram to President Kruger.⁶⁸ At the same time England and Italy had not been able to agree entirely respecting policy in North Africa and in the regions lying contiguous to the Sudan. Thus the experience of nearly twelve years was a rotten base for future Anglo-Italian cooperation. Examination of the state of mind in both countries will but confirm this statement.

⁶⁵ Ferrero to Salisbury, December 24, 1895, Salisbury to Ferrero, January 8, 1896, Blanc to Ferrero, February 5, 1896, D. D., No. 92, pp. 303-305, 311-312.

⁶⁷ Since 1881 Italy had resisted France's effort to make Tunis a part of France and had insisted upon her rights under the Treaty of 1868. Salisbury's decision to negotiate concerning similar British rights thus was a bombshell. See Crispi, III, 79; T. Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, pp. 7-45; Documents diplomatiques, revision des traités tunisiens, 1881-1897; State Papers, Domestic and Foreign, LXXXVIII, 13-16, LIX, 1280-1291.

⁶⁸ In January 1896. See Mary E. Townsend, *The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire*, pp. 184-186.

CHAPTER III

CROSS CURRENTS OF OPINION

The conflict of policy between English and Italian statesmen represented not only fundamental differences of interest and points of view, but also grew out of certain definite and fixed opinions. On the Italian side there was a growing tendency to become irritated with British policy and to seek a solution of Italian troubles with France independently of British counsel and advice. On the British side the air was filled with pessimism. Italy was a bad risk as an ally and friend. Besides, she was mortgaged to England by her incurable hostility to France and permanent military and naval weakness.

Italian irritation first grew out of the disappointments in dealing with England. In 1890 when Crispi was balked in his attempt to secure a grip on Kassala, he adopted a plan which looked towards commercial penetration of the Sudan and naturally involved a rivalry with British interests in Egypt.¹ Shrewdly he looked into the possibility of coming to terms with France and ridding himself of the necessity of close relations with England, but all the efforts that he made from 1890 to 1896 in that direction came to naught.² He did not lose sight of the fact that England might come to terms with France over Morocco and in 1894, when Lord Kimberly proved lukewarm, forebore to push the proposal of his foreign minister, Baron Blanc, that Italy and England should agree to back Spain in thwarting her northern neighbor.³ In 1894 he became impatient with British dilatoriness in the Sudan and occupied Kassala without taking the pains to consult them.⁴ Two years later he was very much irritated and

¹ T. Palamenghi-Crispi, *L'Italia coloniale e Francesco Crispi*, pp. 150-151, footnote.

² Langer, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, pp. 117-118, 121-122, 386; Crispi, III, 190-201.

³ Bülow to Caprivi, February 28, 1894, G. P., VIII, 326-328.

⁴ Bülow to Foreign Office, July 21, 1894, *ibid.*, p. 374; Metternich to Hohenlohe, March 12, 1896, G. P., XI, 163-164.

anxious as a result of Lord Salisbury's refusal to permit him the use of Zeila.⁵ But he realized that so long as France was hostile to Italy he could not be independent of England and Germany.⁶ For that reason whatever anger he felt did not show itself seriously in his conduct of foreign affairs.

Baron Blanc reflected Italian sentiment better than his leader and as events showed had a better grip on the realities of the situation. Probably aware of the fact that strong elements in political and diplomatic circles as well as among the masses of the people desired either a rapprochement with France or a policy of warily courting the winning side,⁷ he prophesied desertion of the policy of dependence upon England and Germany which had characterized the Crispi administrations.⁸ Blanc was fearful lest British cooperation with France and Russia in an inquiry into the Armenian massacres of 1894—from which Italy had been excluded⁹—should extend into the Red Sea region,¹⁰ where it might prove disastrous to Italian hopes. He thought Lord Salisbury's refusal of the use of Zeila violated the understandings of 1894,¹¹ and became willing to join a temporary league against England.¹² At least such was his threat.

Perhaps of more importance in affecting future Italian policy than these effervescences of statesmen who saw their political Waterloo looming before them was the fact that to many Italians the policy of close dependence upon England and Germany and the hostility to France which it involved seemed unprofitable. Early in 1896 the pro-Triple Alliance *Rassegna nazionale* remarked that it was useless to jump on France when both England and Germany were courting her,

⁵ Bülow to Foreign Office, February 9, 1896, G. P., XI, 288-289; Bülow to Foreign Office, January 23, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Bülow to Caprivi, June 21, 1894, G. P., VIII, 372-373.

⁸ Bülow to Foreign Office, January 15, 1896, G. P., XI, 79.

⁹ Marschall to Foreign Office, December 30, 1894, G. P., VIII, 221-222.

¹⁰ Bülow to Foreign Office, January 3, 1895, G. P., VIII, 376.

¹¹ Blanc to Ferrero, January 8, 1896, D. D., No. 92, p. 306.

¹² Bülow to Foreign Office, January 23, 1896, G. P., XI, 224-225.

and when Italy was so deeply involved in Africa.¹³ About the same time the *Times* correspondent in Rome saw indications that Italy would follow a purely Italian policy "without regard to alliances which have no reciprocity and understandings which are purely one-sided."¹⁴ And to give the matter concrete direction leaders like the Marquis di Rudini, the Marquis Visconti-Venosta and Signor Luzzatti saw the advantages of a commercial treaty with France¹⁵ and the necessity of yielding to France in Tunis.¹⁶ Such views became of real importance when these men came into power.

Too much weight, however, should not be given to these utterances. Crispi's successors in office desired a friendly relationship with France, but forsook the logic of such a desire to the extent of seeking to maintain a large part of the former ties with England. The Duke of Sermoneta, Blanc's successor at the Foreign Office, publicly asserted that it was to Italy's interest to have good relations with England.¹⁷ Rudini considered friendship with England traditional,¹⁸ and sought, in the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1896, to reinsert the protocol of 1882 which specified that the agreement was not directed against England.¹⁹ Visconti-Venosta, the most important single influence in shaping Italian foreign policy in the five years following Crispi's fall, likewise demonstrated due respect for her friendship on more than one occasion.²⁰

¹³ *Rassegna nazionale*, LXXXVII (1896), 655, 846.

¹⁴ *The Times*, January 16, 1896, p. 5.

¹⁵ Bülow to Hohenlohe, March 17, 1896, G. P., XI, 293; Bülow to Hohenlohe, July 21, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 294-295; Bülow to Hohenlohe, July 22, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 296-297.

These views are of particular importance when it is considered that ending of controversy might bring French capital back to Italy. British capital was then seeking overseas enterprises. See Giovanni Giolitti, *Memoirs of My Life*, p. 63; Anderson, p. 20.

¹⁶ Bülow to Hohenlohe, July 21, 1896, G. P., XI, 294-295; Bülow to Hohenlohe, October 23, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 299-300.

¹⁷ *Atti parlamentari della Camera dei Deputati*, DLIII, 3994. Afterwards cited as A. P. C. D. The volume numbers are those of the set in the Library of Congress.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, DLII, 3609.

¹⁹ Pribram, II, 107-113.

²⁰ See below, pp. 48, 87.

As a matter of fact the real state of Italian opinion was a confused and uncertain one. The differing points of view were most clearly brought into relief in August, 1897 when the Franco-Russian Alliance was officially announced for the first time. Alfredo Frassati, editor of the *Stampa* of Turin, thought that Italy should remain with the Triple Alliance, join the Dual Alliance or seek a more intimate relationship with England. He preferred and advocated the last.²¹ *L'Italie*, apparently reflecting the view of Visconti-Venosta, replied that the Anglo-Italian Alliance existed in the mind, heart and interest of the two nations. It did not doubt that Italy would join forces with England if the latter's interests in the Mediterranean should be menaced seriously.²² The *Rassegna nazionale* was doubtful if England would change her policy of isolation and thought a great difference existed between sympathy and an alliance. Italy could not afford to bear the burden of all the quarrels of England. Her interests in the Mediterranean and the Near East at present were protected by the Triple Alliance and by her Entente Cordiale with England.²³ Italian navalists, as might have been expected, urged that Italy should rely upon her own efforts and prepare, since English aid was problematical.²⁴

Under such circumstances of opinion Italy's policy was marked out fairly clearly for her statesmen. Irritation at England's attitude was not strong enough to create a diplomatic *volte face*. It was strong enough to make Italians desire another string to their bow, and circumstances so willed it that this string should be of French origin.²⁵

On the other side of the picture British opinion with re-

²¹ Alfredo Frassati, "La politica estera dell'Italia e l'alleanza franco-russa," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXI (1897), 712-736.

²² *L'Italie* quoted in *Mémorial diplomatique*, XXXV (1897), 695.

²³ X, "La politica estera dell'Italia," *Rassegna nazionale*, XCVIII (1897), 606-612.

²⁴ Argus, "Il nostro problema navale," *La Lega navale*, I, (1897), 12; C. Manfroni, "L'Inghilterra e la marina italiana," *ibid.*, pp. 48-51.

²⁵ See below, pp. 64, 81-85.

spect to Italy was pessimistic in the extreme, both with respect to Italy's future and to her value as an ally. Such impressions tended to be deepened by the disorder and tumult that disturbed Italian life from 1896 to 1900.²⁶

Lord Salisbury reflected the natural impressions of an observer of these events and of his experience with Italy's statesmen. He had no confidence in Crispi, "the Randolph Churchill of Italy."²⁷ He thought that the Italians were "sturdy beggars"²⁸ and regretted that Austria-Hungary had been weakened by the creation of united Italy.²⁹ Apparently he counted on the inability of Italy to come to terms with France,³⁰ and expressed his lack of confidence in Italian reliability.³¹ To him she was a "quantité négligeable."³²

Other members of his own party and other parties apparently shared his views with respect to Italy, although some placed more faith in Italian aid. Viscount Goschen in 1896 was confident of Italian assistance if need arose.³³ Joseph Chamberlain, the moving force towards Anglo-German rapprochement in these years, was likewise confident that Italy's needs for the English fleet and financial aid would place her on England's side without any treaty.³⁴ Lord Rosebery, imperialist leader of the Liberal party after Gladstone's

²⁶ Riots followed Adowa and tumult greeted Crispi when he appeared in parliament afterward. The Italian *rendita* dipped lower than it had in two years. Riots, revolutionary activities and changing ministries proved a fitting prelude to the assassination of King Humbert at Monza in 1900. The Italian navy was not growing, the army was discredited and Italians were dazed and pessimistic. For an unfavorable account of these years see Saverio Cilibrizzi, *Storia parlamentare, politica e diplomatica d'Italia*, III, chs. i-vi. See also the *Times*, March 6, 1896, p. 5; *Annual Register*, 1896, p. 249; Francesco Nitti, *Il capitale straniero in Italia*, pp. 18, 78; H. Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, I, 104-105; T. A. Brassey, *Naval Annual*, 1895, pp. 30, 32; Gustavo Bozzoni, *Marina militare e costruzioni navali*, pp. 55-56, in *Cinquant'anni di storia italiana*, I.

²⁷ Buckle (*Series III*), I, 355, 378.

²⁸ Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne, p. 485.

²⁹ Salisbury to E. B. Iwan-Muller, August 31, 1896, B. D., VI, 780.

³⁰ Metternich to Bülow, June 15, 1900, G. P., XVII, 86.

³¹ See above, note 29.

³² See above, note 30.

³³ Arthur D. Elliott, *Life of Lord Goschen*, II, 207.

³⁴ Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 25, 1898, G. P., XIV, 223.

retirement, distrusted Italian ability to keep negotiations secret,³⁵ and Sir Charles Dilke, also imperialistic in his views, considered the Italian fleet "an encumbrance to our own if we had to take charge of them as allies."³⁶ Edward Dacey summed up this feeling of Italian weakness by saying: "I fail to see that Italy could be of any great assistance to England in the event of such a coalition [anti-English in Europe] being formed."³⁷

The columns of the *Times* contributed to darken Italy's picture in English eyes. Two of its leading correspondents, W. J. Stillman and H. Wickham Steed, were convinced that the Italian monarchy and state were in danger.³⁸ According to the dispatches from Rome, Rudini was a cultured, broad-minded and charming gentleman, but was so vacillating that he listened to the last comer.³⁹ He was responsible for the outbreaks of 1898, since he must have known that Italian revolutionary character and history made it necessary for every statesman to sit firmly in the saddle.⁴⁰ Editorially the journal rejoiced that Crispi had not been impeached and the "best friends of Italy abroad" thus outraged.⁴¹ During the May riots of 1898 it warned the Italians that disorders were certain to recur unless measures were taken to "purify the general administration as well as to inspire confidence in the governing classes. At present they cannot be said always to deserve it."⁴² General Pelloux, who succeeded Rudini in 1898, was characterized with the tepid remark that he was an improvement over his predecessor.⁴³

British periodical literature took its cue from such indi-

³⁵ Buckle (Series III), II, 319-320.

³⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XLVII, 68; Sir Charles Dilke, "The Naval Weakness of Great Britain," *Cassier's Magazine*, XII (1897), 435.

³⁷ Edward Dacey, "The Isolation of England," *Fortnightly Review*, LIX (1896), 335.

³⁸ Steed, I, 110; Stillman, II, 711.

³⁹ *The Times*, January 22, 1898, p. 10.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, May 10, 1898, pp. 10, 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, March 24, 1898, p. 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*, May 18, 1898, p. 11.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, June 30, 1898, p. 9.

cations. The *Edinburgh Review* asserted that the Left ⁴⁴ had failed in directing the affairs of Italy due to lower standards and its doctrinaire character. What was needed to get rid of Crispi's excessive care for Italy's reputation abroad, the political scandals and the abundant bribery, was a transformation of patriotism into moral fibre.⁴⁵ The *Spectator* advised free trade, reform of taxation and government, and breaking up of the large estates. However, Italy's shadowy parliament, sectionalism, and politicians who had "too much the aspect of contending political condottieri" made reform difficult.⁴⁶ Pelloux's ministry was afflicted with fright, panic and fear.⁴⁷ E. J. Dillon was of the opinion that Italy had been ruined economically by her statesmen,⁴⁸ and the authoress Ouida agreed with him, terming the above ministry "an irresponsible despotism."⁴⁹ The *Saturday Review* summarized much British opinion when it said: "Italy has been bled to death by a corrupt bureaucracy, and the heavy expenses of an utterly unnecessary army and navy are wrung from the half-starved masses; . . . She was better off in the old days of Papal rule or even of King Bomba. At least men then had bread."⁵⁰

Little was presented on the other side of the picture. An Italian, G. Dalla Vecchia, London correspondent of the official *Opinione*, argued that the outbreaks of May 1898 had been caused more by lack of bread and work than by revolutionary activities.⁵¹ E. S. Morgan's opinion that the party

⁴⁴ In 1876 the party of Italian unification, the Right, had given place to the more radical Left under Depretis.

⁴⁵ "Prosperity and Politics in Italy," *Edinburgh Review*, CLXXXVI (1896), 1-26.

⁴⁶ The *Spectator*, LXXIX (1897), 266-267.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, LXXX (1898), 721-722.

⁴⁸ E. J. Dillon, "The New Political Era," *Contemporary Review*, LXXII (1897), 617-618.

⁴⁹ Ouida, "The Twentieth Italian Parliament," *Fortnightly Review*, LXVII (1897), 679-688; "The Misgovernment of Italy," *ibid.*, LXIX (1898), 957 ff.; "An Impeachment of Modern Italy," *Review of Reviews*, XVII (1898), 254.

⁵⁰ *Saturday Review*, LXXXV (1898), 649.

⁵¹ G. Dalla Vecchia, "The Revolt in Italy," *Contemporary Review*, LXXIV (1898), 113-120.

uniformity of Pelloux's ministry indicated a return to normal conditions was isolated save for the grudging compliment of the *Times*.⁵²

Such was the state of opinion in England and Italy with respect to each other and the relations which they had had. Viewed in the most favorable light it was not such as would encourage the development of more friendly relations and more binding agreements in the future. It was therefore to be expected that England would seek compromise or assistance from more powerful and stable nations than Italy. On the other hand it was equally clear that should the opportunity present itself Italy would seek that independence in foreign policy which had been her national aim in the days of the Risorgimento and was exemplified in the ideal of independence of all foreign control.⁵³

⁵² E. S. Morgan, "The Niobe of Nations," *Westminster Review*, CL (1898), 532; the *Times* as cited in note 43.

⁵³ Michels, p. 91.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS IN AFRICA

The first test of Anglo-Italian cooperation in the period of this study was provided by the Sudanese expedition of 1896 and its consequent challenge to France at the moment when France and Italy were making the first steps toward the rapprochement of 1900 and 1902. Italian policy nowhere clashed openly with that of England, but the dying out of Italian colonial ambitions which characterized the period following the political demise of Crispi and the exigencies of the blossoming francophilism of Rudinì and Visconti-Venosta served finally to cut the thin and meagre bond of common Anglo-Italian action in Africa.

The initiative in this test of Italy's loyalty to her friendship with England came from the latter. It will be remembered that the two powers had not been able to agree on any common program of action in the Sudan since 1891.¹ As late as January 1896 the attitude of the British cabinet was one of opposition to giving any aid to the Italians by means of a diversion against the dervishes in the Sudan, a common enemy of both countries.² Lord Cromer, British agent at Cairo, was apparently reconciled to this decision,³ which corresponded to the difficulties attending an aggressive policy in the Sudan.

Such difficulties were manifold. England was in Egypt subject to a promise of withdrawal,⁴ which an advance would seem to negative. A forward movement would give the ever jealous European powers a much desired opportunity to raise

¹ See chapter ii of this book, pp. 25-26.

² The Italians in Eritrea had two fronts. One was around Adowa where they faced the Abyssinians. The other was around Kassala where they occupied the attention of the dervishes who were a threat also to Suakin and the forces in Egypt proper. For the British attitude, see Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 8, 1896, G. P., XI, 240; Cromer, II, 83.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 82; Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 1, 1896, pp. 19-20.

⁴ Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 1, 1886, pp. 37-38.

the dangerous question of England's tenure there.⁵ Parliamentary opposition to the use of English money or military forces was to be expected.⁶ Egyptian money was hedged and limited in its uses by the restrictions of the *Caisse de la Dette*,⁷ and the Khedive could hardly be expected to sanction the use of Egyptian forces solely to help the Italians.⁸ Under such circumstances unless the British government could be sure that it would have the support of a preponderant group in Europe⁹ at a reasonable price,¹⁰ delay was recommended, and could be borne so long as the Italians held the Egyptian front at Kassala and kept Francophile Abyssinia busy.¹¹

However, domestic sentiment and the situation in Egypt made delay of short duration. Since the early eighties a new kind of imperialistic spirit, based on economic interest and a new idealism, popularized in the nineties by Kipling and others, had been growing throughout England.¹² The Liberal party had split on the question of imperialism, and the election of 1895 constituted the first outstanding victory for colonial aggression.¹³ Military authorities in both England and Egypt were becoming anxious about the undefended "free British Nile" as rumors of the movements of French and Belgians in the upper valley grew more numerous at the end of 1895.¹⁴

⁵ Turkey had in fact broached the question early in 1896. Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, March 4, 1896, G. P., XI, 147.

⁶ The attitude of the anti-imperialists towards Egypt is described in A. G. Gardiner, *Life of Sir William Harcourt*, II, ch. xi.

⁷ Robert H. Wieneffeld, *Franco-German Relations, 1878-1885*, ch. v.

⁸ Sir James Rennell Rodd, *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (Series II), p. 88.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ The Germans had long been using England's position in Europe and Egypt to extract concessions. Salisbury had writhed under the charges, but had paid. See Lady Gwendolyn Cecil, *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, IV, 41.

¹¹ Sir George Arthur, *Life of Kitchener*, I, 190-191; D. D., No. 90, pp. 91-92.

¹² W. R. Inge, *England*, pp. 108-110; Élie Halévy, *History of the English People in 1895-1905*, pp. 10-22.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-8; Gardiner, II, 367.

¹⁴ Baratieri to Blanc, June 7, 1895, D. D., No. 92, p. 75; *Memoirs of Field Marshal Lord Grenfell*, pp. 124-125; Rodd (Series II), p. 87; Major General Frederick B. Maurice and Sir George Arthur,

Under such circumstances the British cabinet began to consider ways and means of action in Egypt. Lord Salisbury, who was convinced that "it is our duty to insist upon, that our influence shall be dominant in Egypt,"¹⁵ but who did not want a quarrel with France on that account,¹⁶ bestirred himself to tell the French ambassador that he was going to arrange for an expedition against Dongola.¹⁷ Apparently this utterance preceded the vague discussion of an expedition to aid Italy which took place in the cabinet during the latter part of February 1896.¹⁸

At this juncture the Italian army under General Baratieri was overwhelmingly defeated at Adowa. The completeness of this débâcle, one of the few defeats a European force has ever suffered from native arms, made it possible that the Italian troops would be forced to withdraw to the coast of the Red Sea.¹⁹ Should this happen, the entire flank of any projected Egyptian advance would be exposed to an attack from dervishes released from their position before Kassala.²⁰

Most opportunely lack of observation and a sympathy for Italy made for an unhampered decision. For the most part English popular attention was directed towards South Africa and towards Berlin, which had recently been linked by the Jameson raid and the Kruger Telegram.²¹ Two leading papers, however, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Chronicle*, mentioned Anglo-Italian cooperation in the Sudan.²² The *Times* courteously remarked that nothing which touched the

Life of Lord Wolseley, p. 301; C. R. Ballard, Kitchener, p. 57. The phrase quoted is from Gardiner, II, 195.

¹⁵ Cecil, III, 127.

¹⁶ Ibid., IV, 41.

¹⁷ Morrison B. Giffen, Fashoda, p. 25.

¹⁸ Grenfell, p. 124; Hauser, I, 366; Rodd (Series II), pp. 85-86.

¹⁹ Mondaini, part 1, pp. 124-125; G. Cesari, "Cassala," Rivista coloniale, XXI (1926), pp. 54-56.

²⁰ Henry S. Alford and William D. Sword, The Egyptian Soudan, its Loss and Recovery, pp. 41-42. Kassala while five hundred miles from Dongola was only 18 hours' march from the Athara, an important tributary of the Nile. Sir Samuel W. Baker, The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia, p. 62.

²¹ R. H. Gretton, A Modern History of the English People, p. 397. See also B. D., I, 326-327.

²² Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, March 4, 1896, G. P., XI, 237-238.

military and financial interests of Italy could leave England indifferent.²³ But its advice that the Italians withdraw from Kassala and the mountains to Massowa reflected either the state of uncertainty then prevailing in official circles or a singular lack of perspicacity.²⁴

The British in Egypt were in no such fog. Realizing to what extent British interests were involved in the Italian defeat at Adowa, the officials at Cairo favored speedy relief by an advance from nearby Suakin.²⁵ Kitchener, then Sirdar of the Egyptian army, favored mediation between the Italians and Menelik, Emperor of Abyssinia.²⁶

Such action would have meant an open confession of practical alliance with Italy. And this was what Lord Salisbury had long tried to avoid.²⁷ The Germans gave him the opportunity to avoid the tacit commitment.

For some time an increasing tension had existed between England and Germany. Salisbury's proposal to partition Turkey and German cooperation with England's rivals in the Far East had found a fitting climax in the Kruger Telegram. France had not replied favorably to German efforts for an entente early in 1896.²⁸ Under such circumstances Italy's misfortune formed a possible bridge towards a renewal of more cordial relations between Germany and England.²⁹ Consequently the German Emperor exerted himself to obtain British aid for Italy.³⁰ Such a course likewise had the advantage of lightening his own burden of a troublesome ally whom his own government had been compelled to tell that the Triple Alliance was no society for profit.³¹

Salisbury, who had long been accustomed to German com-

²³ *The Times*, March 4, 1896, p. 9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, March 7, 1896, p. 11.

²⁵ Rodd (Series II), pp. 85-86. Preference for this route was in harmony with Cromer's idea that the route from Suakin to Berber was to be the commercial pathway of the Sudan. Cecil, IV, 328.

²⁶ Metternich to Hohenlohe, March 4, 1896, G. P., XI, 163-164.

²⁷ See above, pp. 22-23.

²⁸ Halévy, pp. 34-35.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Hohenlohe to Hatzfeldt, March 3, 1896, G. P., XI, 235-236.

³¹ Hohenlohe to Bülow, February 15, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

plaints concerning his treatment of Italy,³² at first was unmoved and told Hatzfeldt, the German ambassador in London, that he could see no way of assisting Italy.³³ But his attempts to come to an understanding with France on his proposed expedition to Dongola had come to naught.³⁴ He was likewise soon confronted with the fact that through General Ferrero, Italian ambassador at London, the Italians were appealing for a diversion in order that Kassala might be relieved from the menace of ten thousand dervishes.³⁵ Further inducement to action was furnished by the replacement of the distrusted Crispi by the more pleasing Rudini.³⁶

It was under such circumstances that the British cabinet met to consider the question of Egypt and Kassala on March 12, 1896. Just what took place in this discussion is not yet fully known. But it would seem that Sir Francis Grenfell, Lord Wolseley and Joseph Chamberlain were in favor of definite action in a military sense.³⁷ Lord Salisbury, who held out to the last,³⁸ finally gave way and the order for a military expedition against Dongola routed Lord Cromer from his bed at 3 A. M.³⁹

The decision once taken was skilfully followed up. Lord Salisbury announced that the beleaguered situation of Kassala and Suakin rendered an advance advisable. For this purpose the British government was ready to sanction the use of five hundred thousand pounds of Egyptian reserve funds.⁴⁰ The Italian government at once fell in line and appealed for German support of this proposition.⁴¹ Although neither of

³² For example, see Cecil, IV, 373-374.

³³ Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 6, 1896, G. P., XI, 239.

³⁴ Hauser, I, 366-367.

³⁵ Adamoli to Ferrero, March 10, 1896, D. D., No. 93, p. 15; Ferrero to Caetani, March 10, 1896, *ibid.*

³⁶ Schulthess, *Europäischer Geschichtskalender*, 1896, p. 235; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 12, 1896, G. P., XI, 241.

³⁷ Grenfell, pp. 124-125; Rodd (Series II), p. 87; Maurice and Arthur, p. 301; Arthur, I, 191.

³⁸ Halévy, p. 36.

³⁹ Rodd (Series II), p. 87.

⁴⁰ Salisbury to Lascelles, March 15, 1896, G. P., XI, 152-153.

⁴¹ Marschall to Bülow, March 16, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 155; Bülow to Foreign Office, March 16, 1896, *idem.*

her allies was enthusiastic each joined Italy in creating a majority in the *Caisse de la Dette* for the British request.⁴² Germany, however, following the example set in her first appeal to England for aid to the Italians, and willing to see England involved with France over Egypt,⁴³ added strength to the British position by frowning upon Russia's proposal to protest against use of Indian troops at Suakin to relieve Egyptian forces there.⁴⁴ The combination of 1887, thus recreated, could not be met by the French and Russians openly, and Kitchener started on the road to Khartoum while Marchand headed for Fashoda.⁴⁵

Domestic opposition in England was silenced. Viscount Curzon represented the expedition as a benefit to Egypt and a defense of the interests of Italy, Great Britain and civilization.⁴⁶ Balfour, the sublime defender of "the indefensible," emphasized the point that the way chosen by the British government was the best means of helping Italy.⁴⁷ Shrouded in the veil of an Egyptian expedition and under the cloak of that sublime mysticism which seems to come over most Englishmen when they think of Italy, warnings of grave consequences which fell from the lips of Labouchère and Sir William Harcourt went almost unheeded.⁴⁸

The expedition thus embarked upon affected Italy more deeply than any other power save France. She was still bound under the agreement of 1887 to support England in Egypt.⁴⁹ To flinch from support of an expedition embarked upon, ostensibly at least, for her benefit, was hardly possible. Yet isolated battalions scattered from Kassala to Agordat, Crispi's decision to seek peace with Abyssinia, and the great

⁴² Rodd (Series II), pp. 91-92; Bülow to Foreign Office, March 21, 1896, G. P., XI, 166-167. It should be noted that this decision was later set aside as the result of an appeal of the French and Russians to the mixed tribunals. Giffen, p. 31.

⁴³ Hohenlohe to Radolin, May 20, 1896, G. P., XI, 188-189.

⁴⁴ Ibid., and Anlage, p. 190; B. D., I, 328.

⁴⁵ Hauser, I, 366-367.

⁴⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XXXVIII, 1027-1029.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 1050-1052.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 1031-1039, 1043-1046. The motion to adjourn was defeated by a vote of 208 to 120. Ibid., p. 1060.

⁴⁹ Steed, I, 116; Pribram, I, 95; note 15, ch. ii.

uncertainty which reigned concerning the designs of Menelik constituted disturbing elements of a dangerous situation.⁵⁰ Immediate liquidation of the African enterprise seemed advisable in view of its drain of 140,000,000 lire on the already overburdened Italian treasury.⁵¹ Rudini's ministry had been constituted with the support of the Extreme Left.⁵² This parliamentary tendency rested on an anti-English and anti-African base.⁵³ Besides, one of the last acts of the Crispi ministry had been to order the evacuation of Kassala under certain contingencies.⁵⁴ Abandonment of Kassala, however, would mean desertion of England whose officials wished its retention,⁵⁵ but whose government cannily enough made no pledges as to the amount of aid Italy could expect.⁵⁶

Italian hesitation was but natural. To Rudini, Kassala was a stronghold in which either a symbol of national pride or another crushing military defeat might be found.⁵⁷ At his side stood King Humbert who hoped that a reconciliation of national honor and military exigency might be discovered.⁵⁸ Despite scepticism concerning the advantage to be derived by Italy from the Dongola expedition,⁵⁹ Rudini's ministry withheld definite instructions to evacuate Kassala for a period of forty-eight hours as soon as it knew that the expedition had been ordered.⁶⁰ Further consideration resulted in an order to General Baldissera, instructing him to hold Kassala as long as military exigencies would permit in the name of the national honor of Italy.⁶¹

⁵⁰ G. Cesari, "Cassala," *Rivista coloniale*, XX (1926), 54-56.

⁵¹ Mondaini, part 1, p. 120.

⁵² Michele Rosi, *L'Italia Odierna*, II, Part 3, 1974.

⁵³ *Nuova Antologia* (Series IV), LXII (1896), 572-576. For examples of their anti-English remarks, see A. P. C. D., DLII, 3511-3512, 3558 and Imbriani-Poerio, *Discorsi parlamentari*, pp. 576, 587.

⁵⁴ Mocenni to Baldissera, March 3, 1896, D. D., No. 93, p. 7.

⁵⁵ Bülow to Foreign Office, March 23, 1896, G. P., XI, 245.

⁵⁶ *Parliamentary Debates* (Series IV), XXXVIII, 1171-1172.

⁵⁷ Bülow to Foreign Office, March 23, 1896, G. P., XI, 245.

⁵⁸ Bülow to Hohenlohe, March 18, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 244.

⁵⁹ Bülow to Foreign Office, March 15, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 243-244.

⁶⁰ Rudini-Ricotti-Caetani to Baldissera, March 13, 1896, D. D., No. 93, p. 20.

⁶¹ Rudini-Ricotti-Caetani to Baldissera, March 14, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 23-24; Buckle, III, 33.

Such an exhortation did not suffice. General Baldissera was aware of the tenuous hold his forces had on Kassala. Consequently on April 4, 1896 he ordered its evacuation, thinking that it could not be defended with the troops that he had available.⁶²

Almost a week elapsed before the news reached Cairo, Rome and London. At once the interested authorities took alarm. Sirdar Kitchener, who had shown his interest in Kassala by requesting the Italians to keep in close touch with him⁶³ and who had barely gotten the preliminaries of his expedition under way, protested that evacuation would impair his prospects of success.⁶⁴ Lord Cromer joined his complaints to those of Kitchener,⁶⁵ while Sir Clare Ford, British ambassador at Rome, pointed out that evacuation would encourage the dervishes. Should it take place he asked for prompt notice.⁶⁶ Emperor William threw his weight on the British side,⁶⁷ and through Freiherr von Marschall insisted that Italian backing down would put German efforts to secure British aid in a very dubious light.⁶⁸

The Rudini ministry gripped the solution thus offered. Changing from the emphasis upon national pride and honor, General Ricotti telegraphed Baldissera that political considerations dictated the retention of Kassala unless military contingencies should demand evacuation,⁶⁹ and on April 20, 1896 definite instructions were given him to occupy it until fall.⁷⁰ But both Rudini and Caetani, Duke of Sermoneta, emphasized the point that it was being retained on account of friendship for England and the necessity of maintaining Italy's influence in the affairs of Egypt so intimately connected with those of the Mediterranean.⁷¹

⁶² Baldissera to Ricotti, April 4, 1896, D. D., No. 93, p. 43.

⁶³ Salvago-Raggi to Caetani, March 14, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁶⁴ Salvago-Raggi to Caetani, April 9, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Caetani to Ferrero, April 10, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 46.

⁶⁷ Bülow to Foreign Office, April 12, 1896, G. P., XI, 246-247.

⁶⁸ Marschall to Bülow, April 11, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 245-246.

⁶⁹ Ricotti to Baldissera, April 10, 1896, D. D., No. 93, p. 46.

⁷⁰ Rudini-Ricotti-Caetani to Baldissera, April 20, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 53.

⁷¹ A. P. C. D., DLIII, 3994; *ibid.*, DLV, 6940.

Just how forced this solution was and just how little Rudini was tied to an Anglophile policy was soon revealed by what is known as the "Greenbooks" episode.⁷² As might have been expected the Adowa disaster had become a political issue in Italy. Rudini was anxious to discredit Crispi, mollify France and end Italy's connection with Africa.⁷³ Consequently he prepared four pamphlets of documents dealing with the preliminaries of the Adowa campaign.⁷⁴ In his haste to get the matter before the Italian public he did not submit the documents published to the prior inspection of the British government.⁷⁵ Published under such circumstances, the documents revealed an embarrassingly close connection between British and Italian policy in Africa.⁷⁶

Publication resulted in domestic repercussions, both in Italy and in England. Liberals like Sir William Harcourt were suspicious of ideal wars.⁷⁷ John Morley and Gibson Bowles at once sought to use the incident for the purpose of eliciting publication of all relevant dispatches.⁷⁸ Viscount Curzon admitted that the Italian government had not consulted the British government on the matter of publication, but refused to reveal further details concerning Salisbury's or Rosebery's negotiations with respect to Africa and Zeila.⁷⁹ The radical Labouchère contended that the Dongola expedition was not for the benefit of Egypt.⁸⁰ Sir William Harcourt argued that withholding of documents was the reverse of constitutional practice.⁸¹ Balfour coldly remarked that

⁷² Greenbook is the name applied to Italian diplomatic documents.

⁷³ The Times, May 20, 1896, p. 7.

⁷⁴ These document collections are numbered from 91 to 94, inclusive. Titles are given in the bibliography of this work.

⁷⁵ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XLI, 296-297.

⁷⁶ One example should be cited. Blanc charged that the British in refusing the use of Zeila were going back on the pledge they had made in 1894 respecting Harrar. Blanc to Ferrero, February 5, 1896, D. D., No. 92, pp. 311-313. Since the British in 1888 had agreed not to annex Harrar, this looked like duplicity to the French. Such revelations were likewise calculated to arouse suspicion concerning British motives in the Dongola campaign.

⁷⁷ Gardiner, II, 414.

⁷⁸ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XLI, 296.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 297.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 517.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 526.

the conduct of Italy was such as to make impossible confidential communications between governments,⁸² but refused to confirm the accuracy of the Italian dispatches,⁸³ although his refusal to publish the British side tacitly did so. In Italy the ministerial opposition sought to show that the Rudini ministry had lost the confidence of England and the world.⁸⁴ Rudini, however, pointed out that the fact that negotiations were being carried on with other states showed that he was not open to such a charge.⁸⁵ Caetani, his foreign minister, admitted that the usual procedure in publishing dispatches involving other governments had not been followed. But he contended that the necessity for giving the truth had forced this deviation, and that the explanations this step had made necessary had shown "for one more time and in a luminous manner how much the relations of England and Italy were inspired by the spirit of cordiality and friendship."⁸⁶

The effect of this incident is hard to appraise. Its most significant result outwardly was to give any enemy of the existing administrations in both countries an opportunity to launch a shaft of abuse. It is undoubtedly an exaggeration to say that Rudini's act almost separated England and Italy forever.⁸⁷ But it did make cordial relations more difficult. The *Times* considered it mischievous that "The Greenbooks have misrepresented these relations [of Great Britain and Italy] in order to discredit the late Italian Government for party ends."⁸⁸ Its correspondent at Rome warned that the policy of the Italian ministry threatened to leave England and Egypt alone in the Sudan.⁸⁹ The *Nuova antologia* angrily remarked that public opinion instead of attacking the ministry should have resented the brutality of Curzon and

⁸² Ibid., pp. 538-539.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 554.

⁸⁴ A. P. C. D., DLIV, 5360-5365.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 5366.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 5361.

⁸⁷ "XXX," "La fobia della pubblicità nella politica internazionale," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXIV (1904), 523.

⁸⁸ The *Times*, May 12, 1896, p. 11.

⁸⁹ Ibid., June 8, 1896, p. 7.

Balfour.⁹⁰ Rudini coolly refused to discuss what had been said in the British parliament,⁹¹ and soon afterwards replaced the Anglophile Caetani with the Francophile Visconti-Venosta.⁹²

Italian negotiations for peace with Abyssinia showed a similar spirit of disregard for British interests. Neither Rudini nor Malvano shared the Crispian fear of Russian entrance into the Mediterranean nor of Franco-Russian hegemony in Abyssinia.⁹³ Anxious about the safety of Italian prisoners held by Menelik⁹⁴ and sceptical concerning England's ability to aid in peace negotiations,⁹⁵ Rudini undoubtedly approved of Visconti-Venosta's acceptance of Russian assistance in Italy's relations with Menelik.⁹⁶ Coupled as this was with concessions to the French in Tunis,⁹⁷ it meant that Rudini had at least one foot in the Franco-Russian camp.

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the treaty of peace between Italy and Abyssinia which was signed on October 26, 1896 contained a threat to British interests. The Italian government gave up its dream of subordinating Abyssinia and agreed that until a definite boundary should be fixed between Eritrea and Abyssinia it would cede none of Eritrea to any other power than Abyssinia.⁹⁸ The possibility of a retirement from Eritrea thus envisaged meant that Menelik, if he chose, might threaten Egypt from its highlands and be free to extend his domains to the Nile as he had once desired.⁹⁹ Since French influence was promot-

⁹⁰ Nuova antologia (Series IV), LXIII (1896), 788.

⁹¹ A. P. C. D., DLIV, 5366-67.

⁹² In July 1896.

⁹³ Bülow to Hohenlohe, May 13, 1896, G. P., XI, 250-253; Bülow to Hohenlohe, May 22, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 198-200. Malvano was a permanent official in the Foreign Office.

⁹⁴ Bülow to Hohenlohe, May 13, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 250-253.

⁹⁵ Bülow to Hohenlohe, April 22, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 247-248.

⁹⁶ Bülow to Hohenlohe, October 23, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 260-261.

⁹⁷ The Tunisian treaties were signed on September 25, 1896.

⁹⁸ Sir Edward Hertslet, *The Map of Africa by Treaty* (1909), II, 458-59.

⁹⁹ C. E. Underhill, "Abyssinia under Menelik and After," *Quarterly Review*, CCXXXVII (1922), 37.

ing Menelik's ambition, Italy's step was pregnant with danger.¹⁰⁰

But the Abyssinian cloud had a silver lining. Removal of Italian pretenses to a protectorate opened a way for England to negotiate directly with Menelik.¹⁰¹ Consequently early in 1897 Mr. James Rennell Rodd,¹⁰² one of the most skilled negotiators with African potentates that England had, was sent on a mission to Addis Abeba. Dispatched for the primary purposes of indicating the interests of England and heading off French and Russian influence,¹⁰³ he secured a treaty of commerce and friendship and a promise that Menelik would not supply arms to the dervishes.¹⁰⁴ In the course of his negotiations he disavowed any responsibility of the British government for the Italian occupation of Massowa of which Menelik had accused them,¹⁰⁵ and sacrificed former Anglo-Italian understandings by abandoning the line of 1894 between Harrar and British Somaliland.¹⁰⁶ What this meant was revealed in the next year when Viscount Curzon asserted that the boundary between Abyssinia and the remainder of Somaliland was a matter which interested only Italy and Abyssinia.¹⁰⁷ British negotiations with Menelik, while safeguarding British interests, thus involved dropping of any responsibility for or connection with Italian designs or ambitions.

As a consequence of these negotiations with Abyssinia, Kassala was the only visible symbol of Anglo-Italian cooperation in Africa. It will be remembered that due to British insistence its occupation had been prolonged until the fall of 1896. At this time its immediate fate was undecided. Vis-

¹⁰⁰ G. Hanotaux, *Fachoda*, pp. 133-135.

¹⁰¹ *The Times*, February 24, 1897, p. 9; Count Edward Gleichen, *With the Mission to Menelik*, p. 4.

¹⁰² Later Sir James Rennell Rodd.

¹⁰³ Gleichen, *With the Mission to Menelik*, p. 4. See also Gleichen, *Memoirs of a Guardsman*, p. 158.

¹⁰⁴ Rodd (Series II), pp. 109-110, 112-114, 164 ff.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Carlo Rossetti, *Storia diplomatica della Etiopia durante il regno di Menelik II*, map next to cover.

¹⁰⁷ *Parliamentary Debates (Series IV)*, LIII, 489-490.

conti-Venosta wanted to hold it as a card to play when England should reach Khartoum.¹⁰⁸ Rudini, as might have been expected, wanted to get out of Eritrea, but feared the opposition of King Humbert and Italian public opinion to such a course.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly his public utterances were confined to the nebulous formula of economy and a minimum of military effort in Africa.¹¹⁰ Reports that the ministry was considering plans for a buffer state in the hinterland of Eritrea or entrusting the entire colony to a commercial company—all steps to be taken in harmony with England—indicated the divided state of mind which existed in the Italian ministry.¹¹¹

Early in 1897 events began to force Rudini's not unwilling hand. A dervish invasion of Eritrea stimulated Italian sentiment for the evacuation of Kassala.¹¹² Rumors became rife that a retreat from the highlands to Massowa was imminent.¹¹³ The *Nuova antologia* began to complain that the English had the air of doing Italy a service by permitting her to remain at Kassala.¹¹⁴ The parliamentary election of March 1897 resulted in gains for the anti-colonial Extreme Left.¹¹⁵ Consequently when the new parliament assembled the continued occupation of Eritrea and retention of Kassala came under a constantly increasing fire.¹¹⁶ Despite the opposition of Di San Giuliano and of General Dal Verme¹¹⁷ Rudini, probably very willingly, announced that since the occupation of Kassala did not serve political or military ends, and since the ministry was committed to a policy of economy, Kassala would be evacuated as quickly as possible. The evacuation, he said, might extend to include all of Eritrea

¹⁰⁸ Bülow to Hohenlohe, October 23, 1896, G. P., XI, 260-261.

¹⁰⁹ Bülow to Hohenlohe, November 3, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 261-262.

¹¹⁰ A. P. C. D., DLVI, 7794-7795.

¹¹¹ The Times, November 23, 1896, p. 5.

¹¹² Mondaini, part 1, p. 135.

¹¹³ The Times, January 28, 1897, p. 5; *ibid.*, February 1, 1897, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXVII (1897), 760.

¹¹⁵ The Times, March 23, 1897, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Imbriani-Poerio, p. 726; A. P. C. D., DLXX, 653-671.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 785-794, 812. Dal Verme argued that Italy was under no pledge to restore Kassala and that it would not be in danger once the English had reached Khartoum. *Ibid.*, p. 812.

save Massowa.¹¹⁸ He argued also some days later, May 20, 1896, that Kassala would have no economic utility once Omdurman was occupied by the English.¹¹⁹ And he lost no time in communicating his desires with respect to Kassala to the British government, although he did express a desire to consult their convenience in evacuation.¹²⁰

Rudini's primary motive in this policy was undoubtedly political in character, and lay rooted in his own anti-African prejudices. But this point should not be overstressed. Rudini, like most Sicilians, was being hurt by the continued tariff war with France,¹²¹ and considered the conclusion of a commercial treaty with France as a life and death matter.¹²² In April 1897, the same month that he made his announcement concerning Kassala, negotiations were opened with France concerning new commercial relations.¹²³ And it is likely that Visconti-Venosta was reconciled to this Kassala policy by the fact that he found the French very conciliatory about Tripoli, soon to be a touchstone by which Italy measured the friendship of her neighbors.¹²⁴ The influence of such a situation upon the Italian decision should not be neglected and probably counted for as much as did the pressure of domestic politics. Both might well have argued: why continue to pursue an expensive Anglophile policy at Kassala and run the risk of losing all France might offer?

As matters stood, then, Rudini's decision to evacuate Kassala depended for its effect in Anglo-Italian relations upon the interpretation which he might give his own phrase, "the convenience of the English." From the British point of view he could hardly have chosen a more inconvenient time. British policy had just been humiliated by the result of the Greco-Turkish war.¹²⁵ Operations in Egypt were waiting on

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 694-697.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 859-860.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 697.

¹²¹ Constantin Dumba, *Memoirs of a Diplomat*, p. 39.

¹²² Bülow to Hohenlohe, March 17, 1896, G. P., XI, 293.

¹²³ A. Billot, *La France et l'Italie*, II, 411-412.

¹²⁴ Wedel to Bülow, January 19, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 747-748.

¹²⁵ Halévy, p. 38.

the just initiated construction of the Abu Hamed railroad.¹²⁶ Limited available financial resources made difficult the extension of operations which the occupation of Kassala would involve.¹²⁷ And all the time Lord Salisbury was watching with bated breath and hoping that Colonel Marchand, the emissary of French civilization in Africa, would not reach the Nile.¹²⁸

Apparently Rudini took this situation into very slight consideration. During the last half of 1897 he continually badgered the British with requests for relief of the Italians at Kassala.¹²⁹ Lord Salisbury, although preferring that Kassala should be held until the Egyptian campaign was over, had replied in midsummer that relief was probable by Christmas, 1897.¹³⁰ Rudini, however, stayed not his importunities and paid no attention to his colleague, Visconti-Venosta, who insisted publicly that Kassala could not be left to the derbies nor must it be the cause of terminating friendly relations with England.¹³¹

The first consequence of this attitude was irritation on the part of the British. Lord Salisbury exclaimed, "I have often been pestered by people who wanted to get something, but never before have I seen people in such a hurry to give up something."¹³² Lord Cromer made a similar remark to General Luchino dal Verme,¹³³ but Rudini paid no heed. Through his organ, *l'Opinione*, while Visconti-Venosta was away, Rudini announced in October 1897 that unless relief reached Kassala by Christmas day Italy would have to do the best she could under the circumstances.¹³⁴ Steed in the

¹²⁶ Winston L. S. Churchill, *The River War*, I, 289 ff.

¹²⁷ Rodd (Series II), pp. 193-194.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.

¹²⁹ Steed, I, 116.

¹³⁰ *The Times*, July 9, 1897, p. 5; *ibid.*, December 30, 1897, p. 5.

¹³¹ A. P. C. D., DLXXII, 3345. For Rudini's importunities see Mario Grosso, "In tema di Cassala," *Rassegna italiana*, XXVIII (1931), 172 ff.

¹³² Steed, I, 122-123.

¹³³ General Luchino dal Verme, "L'Italia nel libro di Lord Cromer," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXXXVII (1908), 379.

¹³⁴ *The Times*, October 4, 1897, p. 5.

columns of the *Times* termed this statement discourteous and sharply reminded Rudinì that under the protocol of 1891 Kassala was to be held until Egypt should be in a position to reoccupy it.¹³⁵ Sirdar Kitchener, threatened on his left flank by the proposed evacuation and pinched for money, telegraphed his resignation to Cairo.¹³⁶

Naturally the second consequence was the speeding up of the Italian evacuation of Kassala. After investigation of ways and means by Colonel Parsons,¹³⁷ Kitchener was summoned to Cairo and the sixteenth Egyptian battalion ordered to Kassala.¹³⁸ Evacuation of the Italian forces took place on Christmas day, 1897, amidst the tears of the Italian officers, and the Italian native battalion entered Egyptian service.¹³⁹

At the time Italian opinion was divided between regret at having to surrender Kassala and at having assumed so heavy and profitless a burden.¹⁴⁰ It became a relic of glory and of sadness. Since 1917 it has constituted one of the objects of Italian colonial ambition.¹⁴¹ In 1897 its abandonment in an atmosphere of irritation cut the last tie which bound England and Italy in Africa. Despite the fact that cooperation was renewed in the next year during the Cretan and Turkish crises, as well as during that of Fashoda, the upshot of the entire matter boded little good for the future of relations between the two powers.

¹³⁵ Passim, October 4, 6, 25, 1897.

¹³⁶ Ballard, pp. 62-63.

¹³⁷ The *Times*, September 30, 1897, p. 5; Arthur, I, 218.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹³⁹ Cilibrizzi, III, 31-32; Trattati, protocolli, ecc. ed altri documenti relativi all'Africa, I, 570-577.

¹⁴⁰ The *Times*, September 29, 1897, p. 3; P. Vigoni, "Il governatore civile dell'Eritrea," *Esplorazione commerciale*, XII (1897), 338-341; *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXI (1897), 560.

¹⁴¹ Mondaini, part 1, p. 399.

CHAPTER V

WARY COOPERATION IN THE NEAR EAST AND AT FASHODA

Divergencies similar in character to those experienced by England and Italy in their dealings with each other at Kas-sala were encountered by the two during the period from 1896 to 1898 in the Near Eastern question and the Fashoda crisis. But the future of a Turkey, face to face with the covetousness and the disintegrating forces of Western civilization,¹ so involved the control of the Mediterranean Basin that Italian cooperation with England was more easily attained than in the region lying between the Red Sea and the Nile. Both of these crises were complex in character and did not involve the question of Anglo-Italian relations in a leading rôle. But at the same time indications were not lacking that Italian statesmen were seeking to make Italy more free in "*mare nostrum*."

The island of Crete which lies at the gateway to the Aegean was the part of the Ottoman Empire that furnished the main question for the European powers to consider while Marchand and Kitchener were marching towards Fashoda. After Greece had attained her independence in the early part of the nineteenth century this island, inhabited by Greeks and Moslems, had been continuously restless.² Turkish misrule, differences in race, religion and culture, and Greek covetousness, all these kept the forces of revolution seething at the boiling point.³ The Sultan by an alternating policy of repression and concession did nothing to conquer such tendencies.⁴

¹ The policy of the European powers has been compared to that of backing horses at a race. The comparison is too apt, but fits generally. See Arnold Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, pp. 39-40. The disintegrating force, of course, is that of nationalism. See *ibid.*, pp. 15-18.

² William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire*, pp. 74, 166-168, 306-318, 431.

³ Willis M. Tyler, *The European Powers and the Near East*, pp. 159-162; Ward and Gooch, III, 238.

⁴ Miller, pp. 410-411; Hauser, I, 442-444.

Consequently by the middle of 1896 disorder was so chronic in Crete that both England and Italy sent warships there as did most of the other great powers.⁵ Both governments announced that they did not intend to take any separate action, but would consult the other powers.⁶

At this point the European powers saw that they must intervene. Greece had tried to help the insurgents in order to head off the growing sentiment there for an autonomy which would compromise her ambitions,⁷ and the activities of her citizens created the danger of a war which might involve other powers.⁸ Under such circumstances the powers brought pressure to bear on the Sultan, and demanded a Christian governor general and reforms on the basis of those of 1878.⁹ In August 1896 the Sultan yielded and summoned the Cretan General Assembly which had not met in seven years.¹⁰ On the other hand the powers urged Greece to restrain her subjects.¹¹

With some minor exceptions England and Italy acted in harmony during these negotiations. Suspicion of British motives led the other powers to reject a proposal that the British consul should go on a relief mission in Crete. The Italian ambassador joined in this refusal when he found the majority was against England.¹² Salisbury's rejection of an Austrian proposal to blockade Crete found the Italians on the fence.¹³

⁵ Ward and Gooch, III, 238; Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, p. 79; A. P. C. D., DLIV, 5491.

⁶ Ibid.; Salisbury to Dufferin, June 11, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, pp. 108-109.

⁷ Hauser, I, 445.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Herbert to Salisbury, June 24, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, p. 137; Caetani to Pansa, June 20, 1896, Ferrero to Caetani, June 19, 1896, D. D., No. 96, p. 10.

¹⁰ Pansa to Caetani, June 29, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 12; Caetani to Pansa et al, July 3, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 15; Herbert to Salisbury, June 28, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, p. 146. Details may be found in L. J., No. 1, pp. 208-209.

¹¹ Nobili to Caetani, July 6, 1896, D. D., No. 96, p. 18.

¹² Herbert to Salisbury, July 22, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, p. 224.

¹³ Note of M. Dumba, August 5, 1896, L. J., No. 1, pp. 179-180;

The coincidences and differences of Italian and British policies thus revealed grew out of differences and similarities in points of view. Lord Salisbury moved in an anti-Turkish and pro-Greek atmosphere.¹⁴ Convinced that an unreformed Turkey was doomed,¹⁵ and filled with regret that the British government had once refused the siren proposals of Emperor Nicholas to divide Turkey,¹⁶ he was eager to solve the Turkish question—which Crete involved—by an active policy which would satisfy British interests and opinion. In Italy likewise there was much anti-Turkish feeling.¹⁷ The spirit of Garibaldi crusading in behalf of subjected nationalities like that of the Greeks in Crete was not dead.¹⁸ Italian diplomats could be counted upon to put in a claim for some portion of Turkey should it be divided.¹⁹ But one Italian statesman at least realized and stated definitely a more rational and less adventurous policy; and this had great weight, for Visconti-Venosta was at the helm of Italian policy from the first stages of the Cretan episode. He did not think that it was to Italy's interest to push the Eastern question, so closely related to that of the Mediterranean, to a speedy solution. Her finances and internal situation needed the repair that only peace would give.²⁰

It was also along lines dictated by such ideas that the next phase of the Near Eastern question found the statesmen of the two powers working. August and September 1896 witnessed a recurrence of the endemic Armenian massacres.²¹ On

Salisbury to Monson, August 6, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 7, 1896, p. 265; Visconti-Venosta to Nobili et al, August 6, 1896, D. D., No. 96, p. 39.

¹⁴ Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, February 17, 1897, G. P., XII, 331-333; Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XLVI, 1417-1428, 1446-1532; Gardiner, II, 438-439.

¹⁵ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XLV, 29-30.

¹⁶ Salisbury to E. B. Iwan-Müller, August 31, 1896, B. D., VI, 780.

¹⁷ The Times, February 23, 1897, p. 5.

¹⁸ Michels, p. 91.

¹⁹ In 1896 the Italian ambassador at London asked for Crete. Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, July 25, 1896, G. P., XII, 184-187.

²⁰ A. P. C. D., DLXX, 68 This opinion was shared by Di San Giuliano. Ibid., p. 63.

²¹ For details see Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 1, 1897, pp. 44-52.

September 23, 1896 Lord Salisbury proposed to the Austrian ambassador in London that the powers should agree that whatever Turkish reforms might be adopted by a conference of ambassadors in Constantinople would be put into effect without regard for the wishes of the Turkish government.²² On October 9, Visconti-Venosta proposed a similar plan for discussion by the members of the Triple Alliance,²³ but the German government turned a stony glance in his direction.²⁴ Eleven days later Salisbury placed his ideas before the powers in the form of a circular letter.²⁵ All the powers with the exception of Italy proved more or less lukewarm on the matter, although they did agree to a conference in which coercion might be discussed.²⁶ Visconti-Venosta remarked that this step on the part of England was a sign that the British were willing to cooperate with the rest of the powers, and Turkey would not resist them if they were united.²⁷ But beneath his well-chosen words, hailing this sign of European harmony, there was probably complete satisfaction that England was not going to precipitate matters. In a conference Italy might have a chance, or the matter might be delayed till she was ready. Besides, Italian interests had just received a rebuff and undergone a surrender in Tunis. The government could hardly stand another.

Due to the challenging attitude of Russia nothing came of the ambassadors' conference at Constantinople save another decree to rest in the archives of the Sultan's palace.²⁸ But the dissatisfaction of Turkish and Greek extremists with the

²² Salisbury to Monson, September 23, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 2, 1897, p. 1.

²³ Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, October 9, 1896, G. P., XII, 213-215.

²⁴ Marschall to Pückler, October 15, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

²⁵ Salisbury to O'Connor, October 20, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 2, 1897, pp. 1-5.

²⁶ Marschall to Hatzfeldt, December 10, 1896, G. P., XII, 232; Salisbury to O'Connor, November 25, 1896, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 2, 1897, pp. 15-16; Salisbury to Monson, December 21, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 18; Salisbury to Milbanke, December 21, 1896, *ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁷ Bülow to Foreign Office, November 2, 1896, G. P., XII, 219-220.

²⁸ Hauser, I, 437-439. It should be added that Germany and France concurred in the Russian position. *Ibid.*

Cretan reforms of the preceding September so increased the tension between Greece and Turkey that attention was once more directed to Crete and Armenia was forgotten.²⁹ In February 1897 the Greek government warned the powers that conditions in Crete were intolerable and dispatched two ships with a detachment of troops.³⁰

Both British and Italian authorities considered the Greek action very unwise. Neither wished to take the initiative, but they agreed to oppose Greek aggression and to consider the Cretan question as one quite distinct from others involving Turkey.³¹ In this way the Italian view that Crete was a Mediterranean question, and not merely a Greek or Turkish question, was recognized.³²

In the meantime both Greece and Turkey began to mobilize their forces.³³ At this point the Germans proposed that the Piraeus should be blockaded in order that the aggressive party might be restrained.³⁴ Such a proposal was in harmony with growing German designs in Turkey and the expressed opinion that reforms in Turkey depended upon upholding the authority of the Sultan.³⁵ Lord Salisbury was unwilling to proceed in this direction until the powers, who by this time had Crete under surveillance, should decide upon its fate.³⁶

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 445-446; Chermiside to Currie, February 19, 1897, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 10, 1897, pp. 111-113. See also D. D., No. 96, pp. 72-100.

³⁰ Visconti-Venosta to Saurma, February 7, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 104; Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero et al, February 12, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 118.

³¹ Salisbury to Egerton, February 5, 1897, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, p. 7; Salisbury to Ford, February 11, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 20-21; Salisbury to Ford, February 18, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 34-35; Medana to Visconti-Venosta, February 7, 1897, D. D., No. 96, pp. 124-125.

³² Greece, it will be remembered, had been placed under the protection of England, France and Russia when she achieved independence. The Armenian inquiry could not be said to involve many Italian interests. Only as a Mediterranean and separate question could Crete be interpreted as an Italian interest. The logic of the Italian position is clear.

³³ Avarna to Visconti-Venosta, February 16, 1897, D. D., No. 96, p. 138; Pansa to Visconti-Venosta, February 16, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 140.

³⁴ Visconti-Venosta to Lanza et al, February 18, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 146.

³⁵ Hauser, I, 438; Bülow, I, 294, 301.

³⁶ Salisbury to Lascelles et al, February 17, 1897, Parliamentary

Visconti-Venosta objected that Greece was likely to go ahead obstinately and that Italian public opinion was repugnant to coercion of Greece.³⁷

These expressions of Anglo-Italian interest in the welfare of Crete immediately preceded a Russian proposal that the powers should adopt the principle of Cretan autonomy without annexation to Greece and demand withdrawal of Greek troops from the island.³⁸ Lord Salisbury, seeking to combine his desire for action and the exigencies of phil-hellenism, apparently was willing to use force against both Greece and Turkey if they refused the Russian proposal.³⁹ On the other hand Visconti-Venosta deplored the use of force.⁴⁰ The Russian *démarche* received the approbation of the powers, but the war-crazy Greeks, paying no attention to the acceptance of the Sultan, refused.⁴¹

Following the suggestion of the admirals in command of the powers' ships in Cretan waters,⁴² Russia proposed that both Crete and Greece should be blockaded and that each power should send six hundred men to Crete.⁴³ Visconti-Venosta served notice that his government wanted parity in dealing with Crete by insisting that the forces of all Mediterranean powers in Crete should be equal.⁴⁴ He had no sympathy for the more active proposals of Salisbury. The latter suggested that the Greeks should be allowed to police the island. He was willing to blockade the Piraeus if any one or any two of the four Mediterranean powers, France, Russia, England and Italy, should send ten thousand men to Crete for the purpose of pacifying it.⁴⁵ It is not certain that

Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, p. 23; Ferrero to Visconti-Venosta, February 18, 1897, D. D., No. 96, p. 147.

³⁷ Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, February 19, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 151-152

³⁸ Salisbury to O'Connor, February 24, 1897, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, p. 74.

³⁹ Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero, February 25, 1897, D. D., No. 96, pp. 160-161.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Avarna to Visconti-Venosta, March 8, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

⁴² Canevaro to Visconti-Venosta, March 5, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

⁴³ Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero et al. March 11, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 185.

⁴⁴ Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero et al. March 12, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 185.

⁴⁵ Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, March 8, 1897, G. P., XII, 357-358;

Visconti-Venosta knew of the first proposal.⁴⁶ However, he lost no time in opposing the second. In harmony with his previously expressed distaste for the use of force,⁴⁷ and with his public expressions favoring European unity,⁴⁸ he remarked that Italian opinion was opposed to the military action Salisbury's proposals would involve.⁴⁹ Besides, he understood that France, Germany and Austria were opposed.⁵⁰

The outbreak of war, however, between Greece and Turkey found Visconti-Venosta and Salisbury working more in harmony. When the latter agreed to British participation in the blockade of Crete and the Piraeus,⁵¹ Visconti-Venosta instructed Admiral Canevaro to blockade where the British did, provided the powers were unanimous.⁵²

Despite the fact that the powers had warned Greece and Turkey against war,⁵³ they intervened in behalf of Greece after she had accepted the principle of Cretan autonomy.⁵⁴ Greece thus was saved from complete defeat. In the long drawn out peace negotiations which followed, Visconti-Venosta and Salisbury worked to secure her from excessive territorial cessions and a crushing indemnity.⁵⁵

Marschall's memo., March 11, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 363-364; Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero, March 18, 1897, D. D., No. 96, pp. 193-194.

⁴⁶ It was made to the German ambassador in London, Count Hatzfeldt.

⁴⁷ Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero, February 25, 1897, D. D., No. 96, pp. 160-161.

⁴⁸ A. P. C. D., DLXX, 68.

⁴⁹ Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero, March 18, 1897, D. D., No. 96, pp. 193-194; Ford to Salisbury, March 17, 1897, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, pp. 136-137.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Salisbury to O'Connor, March 11, 1897, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, p. 116; Salisbury to O'Connor, March 14, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 124; Salisbury to Monson, March 20, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 147; Salisbury to O'Connor, March 31, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 166.

⁵² Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero et al, March 26, 1897, D. D., No. 96, p. 205.

⁵³ Hauser, I, 447.

⁵⁴ Avarna to Visconti-Venosta, April 27, 1897, D. D., No. 96, p. 228; Avarna to Visconti-Venosta, May 10, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 241.

⁵⁵ Pansa to Visconti-Venosta, May 14, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 249; Ferrero to Visconti-Venosta, May 18, 1897, *ibid.*, p. 258; Visconti-Venosta to Pansa, May 12 and 21, 1897, *ibid.*, pp. 259-263; Salisbury to Currie, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 11, 1897, p. 269.

There remained the question of the form and character of Cretan autonomy. By the end of 1897 the details of a governmental scheme for Crete were agreed upon.⁵⁶ The choice of a governor by whom these were to be administered was still open. During the year four candidates had been considered and eliminated.⁵⁷

At this juncture a lively competition set in to secure the favor of the revolting Cretans. Russia was first in the field with a proposal that Prince George of Greece should be named governor.⁵⁸ Lord Salisbury and Visconti-Venosta were impelled towards approval of this candidate by their sympathy with the Cretans and the pressure of domestic public opinion.⁵⁹ It is probable also that Salisbury had another idea in mind. In the Near East and the Far East he had found Russia and Germany working together.⁶⁰ Early in 1898 he proposed a partition of China and Turkey into spheres of influence between England and Russia.⁶¹ Could this policy of rapprochement with Russia be carried out, England might escape the isolation in which she found herself. But the Russian occupation of Port Arthur in March 1898 put an end to this hope and Salisbury's conciliatory attitude in the Near East bore no fruit.⁶²

In the same month Germany made a mystifying move in the Cretan situation. She proposed that Crete should be entrusted to two powers for the purpose of administration,⁶³ and when this proposal was rejected she and her ally Austria

⁵⁶ Documents diplomatiques, autonomie crétoise, janvier-octobre, 1898, p. 4 ff.

⁵⁷ G. P., XII, 441-442, footnote.

⁵⁸ Bülow, I, 317.

⁵⁹ Pansa to Visconti-Venosta, January 25, 1898, D. D., No. 97, p. 36; Salisbury to Currie, January 17, 1898, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 5, 1898, p. 9; Bülow to Saurma, February 12, 1898, G. P., XII, 480-481; Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, February 10, 1898, D. D., No. 97, p. 45.

⁶⁰ B. D., I, 1-3, 330-331.

⁶¹ Salisbury to O'Connor, January 25, 1898, B. D., I, 8; O'Connor to Salisbury, February 3, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶² Salisbury to MacDonald, March 25, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 25; Salisbury to O'Connor, March 28, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 27-29.

⁶³ Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 5, 1898, p. 47.

withdrew their ships from Cretan waters.⁶⁴ Reasons for this action are not at all clear. The Kaiser wrote Tsar Nicholas that the British were trying to get Suda Bay,⁶⁵ while Count Bülow assigned as his reason the fact that the naming of Prince George would mean revolution and revolt in the Turkish Empire.⁶⁶ But according to the latter's apologia, written nearly thirty years later, it would seem that Germany wanted the other powers to fall out over Crete. He wrote:

As far as Crete was concerned we had every reason to keep our finger out of that pie. In the Mediterranean we had only minor interests. Whatever happened to the island of Minos was all the same to us; let Russians and English, Turks and Greeks fight over it as they liked. . . .⁶⁷ In Constantinople we were merely blowing the flute of diplomatic advice and persuasion. We were exerting no pressure; if trouble arose, we quietly stood aside; if differences grew strident, we put down our flute and left the concert hall.⁶⁸

The fact that the Cretan question was now in the hands of England, France, Russia and Italy placed Visconti-Venosta in an awkward position. Bülow coldly suggested to him that he should look elsewhere than to Germany for support in Mediterranean questions as his government had been advised to do for the past ten years.⁶⁹ At the same time that Germany and Austria left Crete Visconti-Venosta heard that the Russian government was about to propose that Crete should be placed in the hands of the three powers who had won independence for Greece: France, England and Russia.⁷⁰

Such a solution was possible if the three powers named could agree. But it would shut Italy out of a Mediterranean question as important to her as that of Tripoli and Albania and was contrary to the policy Visconti-Venosta had laid down in his conversations with Salisbury early in the preceding year.⁷¹ Accordingly he insisted both to Sir Clare Ford

⁶⁴ Rumbold to Salisbury, March 23, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 93; Lanza to Visconti-Venosta, January 31, 1898, D. D., No. 97, p. 40.

⁶⁵ G. P., XII, 492, footnote.

⁶⁶ Bülow to Radolin, March 15, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 491-492.

⁶⁷ Bülow, I, 94.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

⁶⁹ Bülow to the Kaiser, April 28, 1898, G. P., XII, 496-497.

⁷⁰ Visconti-Venosta to Morra, March 18, 1898, D. D., No. 97, pp. 54-55.

⁷¹ See above, notes 25 and 26.

at Rome and through General Ferrero at London that there was no connection legally or politically between Grecian and Cretan questions, that the withdrawal of some powers in no way affected the rights of others, and that Crete was a Mediterranean question from which Italy could not be excluded.⁷²

His natural anxiety and importunity apparently embarrassed the British. Salisbury would go no further in reply than to say that if the Russian government made such a proposal the Italian views would receive careful attention.⁷³ Balfour considered discussion of the matter premature since no such proposal was before the powers and added that "Her Majesty's Government would be glad of the cooperation of Italy in dealing with the Cretan problem."⁷⁴ In no way did either admit that the British government was bound by the conversations of the previous year or that they were interested in the maintenance by Italy of her position in Mediterranean questions.⁷⁵

This was cold comfort, but with it Visconti-Venosta had to be content. It came at a time when official Italy was already angered over Salisbury's refusal to sanction a visit of King Humbert to Queen Victoria,⁷⁶ and just after the Kassala episode of the preceding December. Visconti-Venosta left office in May 1898 and the details of the experience seem to have had but little effect on the policy of his impulsive successor, Admiral Canevaro. But his appeal to Russia during this interchange of notes with Great Britain,⁷⁷ and his almost

⁷² Salisbury to Ford, March 14, 1898, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 5, 1898, p. 80; Ford to Salisbury, March 19, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 92-93; Visconti-Venosta to Morra, March 18, 1898, D. D., No. 97, pp. 54-55; Visconti-Venosta to Ferrero, March 18, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 55.

⁷³ Salisbury to Ford, March 14, 1898, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 5, 1898, p. 80.

⁷⁴ Salisbury to Ford, March 29, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 105.

⁷⁵ At this time Chamberlain was pushing the idea of an Anglo-German Alliance and it is interesting to note that he thought Italy needed England's fleet so much that no treaty with her was necessary. Besides, it was his opinion that Germany's attitude would swing both Austria and Italy. Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 25, 1898, G. P., XIV, 221-227. See also Halévy, p. 48.

⁷⁶ Lansdowne to Lascelles, December 19, 1901, B. D., II, 82; Bülow to Metternich, December 18, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 720.

⁷⁷ Visconti-Venosta to Morra, March 18, 1898, D. D., No. 97, pp. 54-55.

contemporaneous unofficial understanding with Delcassé that France and Italy should be united and not divided by the Mediterranean⁷⁸ indicates the direction in which his mind was turning.

Nothing in fact came of the rumor which had so aroused the ordinarily phlegmatic Visconti-Venosta. The initiative, it is true, in the Cretan matter passed into the hands of France and Russia. Their proposals for the temporary administration of the island by the admirals of the blockading fleet were adopted.⁷⁹ But the march of events outstripped the slow methods of chancellories. On September 6, 1898, riot fomented by the Turks broke out in Candia.⁸⁰ Salisbury at once declared that the Turks must go and threatened that England would act alone.⁸¹ He did not like Admiral Canevaro's suggestion that the powers should guarantee the suzerainty of Turkey and the security of her citizens in Crete if the Sultan would but withdraw his troops.⁸² The Fashoda crisis was then about to break out and France and Russia sought in vain to draw Germany and Austria-Hungary into the discussion.⁸³ Seeking to avoid a British settlement of the question, Count Lamsdorff went so far as to hint that he would not object to the admirals taking charge of the situation.⁸⁴

Under such circumstances an opportunity was created for Anglo-Italian cooperation. Admiral Canevaro, an honest impulsive sailor and an Anglophile, agreed with Salisbury that no guarantees should be given the Turks until they evacuated the island,⁸⁵ and he set the tentative date for October 5,

⁷⁸ M. Mévil, *De la Paix de Francfort à la Conférence de Algésiras*, p. 121.

⁷⁹ *L. J.*, No. 5, pp. 48-50.

⁸⁰ Billiotti to Salisbury, September 7, 1898, *Parliamentary Papers*, Turkey No. 7, 1898, p. 3.

⁸¹ Salisbury to Scott et al, September 12, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

⁸² Salisbury to Bonham, September 14, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 36; Costa to Canevaro, September 18, 1898, *D. D.*, No. 97, p. 90.

⁸³ Tornielli to Canevaro, September 14, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 87; Morra to Canevaro, September 14, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Salisbury to Bonham, September 20, 1898, *Parliamentary Papers*, Turkey No. 7, 1898, p. 59; Salisbury to Bonham, September 20, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 64; Canevaro to Costa, September 18, 1898, *D. D.*, No. 97, p. 91; Canevaro to Ferrero, September 20, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

1898.⁸⁶ France and Russia, without support on account of Austro-German abstention, then joined England and Italy in an ultimatum to the Sultan demanding withdrawal of his troops, which he accepted.⁸⁷ The dilatoriness of the Turks, however, delayed evacuation so long that finally their troops were forced out by an ultimatum following which the admirals assumed the government of the island.⁸⁸ Prince George was then installed as governor, the blockade was raised, and the island embarked upon its career of autonomy.⁸⁹

Similar offers of cooperation characterized the Italian attitude towards England during the Fashoda crisis which matured in the midst of the Cretan embroglio when Kitchener found Marchand athwart his path at Fashoda.⁹⁰ At the same time the Italian authorities were careful not to offend France openly lest concessions from France's extremity and the fruit of their efforts toward rapprochement should be lost.

As a matter of fact it would have been hard for Admiral Canevaro to have done otherwise than support the English. From Torrielli, Italian ambassador at Paris, undoubtedly came the opinion that France was a danger to the peace of Europe.⁹¹ Italian public opinion was habituated to the idea of friendship with England,⁹² and hailed with joy Kitchener's victory at Khartoum.⁹³ Italian cooperation in Crete with the British made it difficult to go in opposite directions in the same quarter of the world. The Franco-Italian rapprochement inaugurated in 1896 was not mature.⁹⁴ Besides, as the crisis developed it became apparent that France was isolated.⁹⁵

During the dread October days when peace between France

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Pansa to Canevaro, October 17, 1898, *ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 126-128.

⁸⁹ Miller, p. 439; A. L. Kennedy, *Old Diplomacy and New*, p. 84.

⁹⁰ For the details of this crisis see Morrison B. Giffen, *Fashoda*.

⁹¹ Monson to Salisbury, February 26, 1898, B. D., I, 146.

⁹² See ch. iii.

⁹³ E. Pini, "La riconquista del Sudan Egiziano," *Esplorazione commerciale*, XIII (1898), 241-243; *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXVII (1898), 369; *Rassegna nazionale*, CIII (1898), 431.

⁹⁴ The first real step in this direction was the signing of a commercial treaty between France and Italy on November 21, 1898.

⁹⁵ Giffen, chs. viii and ix.

and England hung in the balance, Canevaro sought to strengthen his ties with England. Alarmed by the report coming from London that something more than sabre-rattling was in the air,⁹⁶ he used his expressed fear that France would make demands upon Italy just prior to the outbreak of a war with England as a basis for a request that he be given a speedy warning of any crisis which might develop.⁹⁷ In case of a Franco-British war, in his opinion, Italy could only be neutral or side with England. Consequently he was putting Genoa, Spezia and Maddalena in a defensible condition.⁹⁸ His earnestness in this position was attested to by his warning to France that Italy was ready to defend her neutrality and to Russia that it would be unwise to raise the Egyptian question.⁹⁹

British policy on the other hand was friendly but reserved, giving evidence of Lord Salisbury's nerve and common sense. He thanked the Italians for their interest in the matter and approved of the preparations Canevaro was making, although he minimized the immediate danger of an attack by France upon Italy.¹⁰⁰ Lord Currie assured Canevaro that the British government was aware of Italian ambitions in Tripoli and its hinterland and would doubtless respect them.¹⁰¹ It is also not without significance that Marchand's departure from Fashoda preceded by only a few days British yielding to Italian wishes in a minor boundary matter in Northern Eritrea.¹⁰²

As a matter of fact too much weight should not be given to the anglophilism of Canevaro for it did not interrupt the Franco-Italian rapprochement then under way. It will be remembered that both Rudini and Visconti-Venosta had been

⁹⁶ Castell-Rudenhansen to Hohenlohe, October 22, 1898, G. P., XIV, 378-379.

⁹⁷ Currie to Salisbury, October 26, 1898, B. D., I, 183.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Currie to Salisbury, November 7, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 189.

¹⁰⁰ Salisbury to Currie, October 27, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 183.

¹⁰¹ Currie to Salisbury, November 4, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 194; Currie to Salisbury, April 4, 1899, *ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁰² F. Martini, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea, 1898-1899*, A. P. C. D., documenti, No. 7, DCXII, p. 45.

determined to better relations with France¹⁰³ and had laid the foundation for them when, pushed by a desire to save what they could for the Italians in Tunis,¹⁰⁴ they had secured favored nation treatment for Italian commerce, the *status quo* for Italian schools, and civil rights of Italian citizens including their privilege to form legal associations and preserve their nationality.¹⁰⁵ They had likewise begun negotiations for a commercial treaty and Canevaro, thinking that he should profit from all the French might offer, had carried these to a successful conclusion during the time that he was seeking British support.¹⁰⁶ In fact he went far to emphasize a lack of hostile intentions towards France. Just prior to the final signature of the commercial treaty on November 21, 1898 he assured the French that no understanding save for mutual good offices existed between England and Italy.¹⁰⁷ And when Nunzio Nasi, Crispian member of his ministry, flamboyantly announced to a Tunisian delegation in Sicily that the Italian government was not going to follow a policy of renunciation in the future and that it accepted the heritage of ancient Rome,¹⁰⁸ *L'Italie*, an official newspaper, promptly denied that Nasi had any mandate to speak for the ministry.¹⁰⁹

England and Italy thus came to the end of 1898 with the major lines of agreement unchanged. Italy was still the most reliable friend that England had in Europe despite her desertion in Africa. But the tendency towards a rapprochement with France and the laying down of a Mediterranean policy which had found its completest exemplification under the di-

¹⁰³ Bülow to Hohenlohe, March 17, 1896, G. P., XI, 293; Bülow to Hohenlohe, October 23, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 299-300.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*; Bülow to Hohenlohe, July 22, 1896, *ibid.*, pp. 296-297. Cf. Dumba, p. 60.

¹⁰⁵ Documents diplomatiques, livre jaune, revision des traités tunisiens, 1881-1897, pp. 47 ff.

¹⁰⁶ Billot, II, 412-436; Currie to Salisbury, January 18, 1899, B. D., I, 280-281.

¹⁰⁷ Currie to Salisbury, November 10, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁸ Annual Register, 1898, p. 239.

¹⁰⁹ *L'Italie* quoted in the Times, October 29, 1898, p. 5. Two Italian reviews condemned Nasi's remarks as unwise and inopportune. *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXVIII (1898), 185; *Rassegna nazionale*, CIV (1898), 206-207.

rection of Visconti-Venosta were harbingers of a future in which these lines might be changed. At the same time, in 1897, the same statesman made a *status quo* agreement respecting Albania, which was an answer to the Austro-Russian accord of the same year and which pointed to the fact that the accord *a trois* of December 1887 was no longer in effect,¹¹⁰ although England and Italy might continue to abide by its spirit.

¹¹⁰ G. Salvemini, "La Triple Alliance," *Revue des Nations Latines*, I, 231; Pribram, II, 114-115.

CHAPTER VI

1899: A YEAR OF HUMILIATIONS

Kassala, Fashoda and Crete had certainly provided sufficient material to perplex British and Italian statesmen in the three years which followed Adowa. But for most Italians the issues involved in the Levant were distinctly of minor importance in comparison with those that arrived soon after 1899 began. On the fourth shore of Italy (Tripoli), in Malta and in China Italian diplomatists suffered disappointments which many thought a real friendship on the part of England would have prevented, just before the star of England came to be shaken by the complications of the Boer War. Such events shaped the atmosphere of a murky uncertainty in which Englishmen and Italians moved for three years. An explanation is consequently necessary.

Tripoli had been the object of Italian dreams for more than half a century.¹ But since 1890, at least, it had been the policy of Lord Salisbury to allow France to occupy herself in the Sahara so long as this did not threaten Egypt.² Consequently, when British and French statesmen came to settle the issues which the Fashoda crisis had raised it was agreed that France should limit herself to the territory south of the Tropic of Cancer and west of 21 and 23 degrees East Latitude. Thus the hinterland of Tripoli lying between Tummo and Lake Tchad, which Turkey still claimed and which the Italians as prospective heirs wished, seemed to fall into French hands.³

Since the French occupation of Tunis in 1881 Italians had become accustomed to be sensitive about any changes close to the Mediterranean. Consequently as soon as the Anglo-

¹ See above, pp. 12-13.

² Cecil, IV, 321-324; Salisbury to Currie, April 25, 1899, B. D., I, 206; Wedel to Foreign Office, January 10, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 743-744.

³ Documents diplomatiques, livre jaune, correspondance concernant la déclaration additionnelle du 21 mars 1899 à la convention franco-anglaise du 14 juin 1898; Crispi, III, 46-48; Bülow to Caprivi, June 21, 1894, G. P., VIII, 371-373.

French agreement was published the *Tribuna*, although reassuring its readers by saying that England surely would not contest the moral right of Italy to Tripoli, argued that the Franco-English agreement permitted France to cut off the caravan trade of Tripoli and violated the Sultan's territorial claims.⁴ The *Corriere della Sera* envisaged the distasteful prospect of having to rely upon England to safeguard Tripoli, and while not confident of the attitude of the French advised friendship with them.⁵ The *Nuova antologia* angrily said that such conduct as that of France and England made a farce out of respect for rights of other states in the region of Tripoli and that a greater check could not have been dealt to Italian diplomacy than that dealt by Italy's long-time friend and probable ally, England, when she joined with Italy's new friend, France, to make an accord which excluded Italy and ignored her interests and moral susceptibilities.⁶ *La Perseveranza* of Milan, the organ of Visconti-Venosta, did not think, however, that anything more than preparedness was necessary, since the agreement did not mean the loss of Tripoli.⁷

Among statesmen and diplomats the reaction was even more profound. Baron Franchetti angrily told Sir William Harcourt that Italy would have to cast England off.⁸ Count Nigra at Vienna, probably the ablest of the Italian ambassadors abroad, complained that this act would mean the resignation of the Italian ministry which had been so friendly to England.⁹ Signor Pansa at Constantinople thought that with France dominant in the hinterland she would also be mistress of Tripoli to the extent that a detrimental change in the balance of power in the Mediterranean would be produced.¹⁰ Baron De Renzis di Montanero at London considered that the

⁴ Quoted in the *Times*, March 31, 1899, p. 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, March 30, 1899, p. 3.

⁶ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXX (1899), 586-587.

⁷ The *Times*, March 30, 1899, p. 3.

⁸ Gardiner, II, 492.

⁹ Rumbold to Salisbury, March 31, 1899, B. D., I, 203.

¹⁰ Marshall to Foreign Office, April 1, 1899, G. P., XIV, 432.

commercial ruin of Tripoli by the French would accomplish the same end.¹¹ The Anglophile Senator Vitelleschi saw Italy locked in and shut out of Africa and said that Europe must know that the situation was intolerable.¹² Senator Cam-poreale, in the midst of professions of friendship for England, considered dolorous her apparent initiative in the matter of abandoning Tripoli to the French. Italians had flattered themselves that England valued Italian friendship too much not to bother about shaking Italian faith in the utility and efficacy of England's friendship.¹³ A perfect storm of *interrogazioni* in the Italian chamber resounded with similar ideas.¹⁴

Publicly the official attitude was one of calmness. *L'esercito italiano* came to the rescue of General Pelloux, then prime minister. Ministries in its opinion were not to blame for the rebuffs produced by lack of preparation.¹⁵ Admiral Canevaro argued that since Italian governments had not been supported by the other states of Europe in defending the Sultan's ineffectively asserted and maintained rights to the hinterland of Tripoli, the Pelloux ministry was not to blame. At the same time the convention of 1899 did not threaten Italy seriously. Both the French and British governments had assured him that Italy need have no fear for Tripoli and its trade routes.¹⁶ General Pelloux pointed out that the convention was negative in character. The Italian public could rest assured that the government would defend Italian rights.¹⁷

Such an attitude was one of trying to put the best face possible on a matter that they all apparently thought was about as bad as could be. Canevaro in particular was boiling over with wrath and consumed with anxiety. He was desirous of maintaining the close friendship with England which had

¹¹ Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 4, 1899, *ibid.*, pp. 432-433.

¹² A. P. Senato, DLXXXIX, 947-951.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 942-943.

¹⁴ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVIII, 3423-3426.

¹⁵ *L'esercito italiano*, March 31, 1899, p. 1.

¹⁶ A. P. Senato, DLXXXIX, 944-947.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 955.

been a cornerstone of Italian foreign policy.¹⁸ He had thought Tripoli was secure after having discussed the matter with Lord Currie in the preceding November.¹⁹ Under the influence of a comprehensible anger he turned to Germany and declared that Italy was not sure how good relations with England were to be maintained.²⁰ Her conduct violated the rights of the Sultan and ignored the agreements of 1887. It was dishonest, a poor return for Italy's friendship and a blow in the face. British support for Italian ambitions in China and recognition of anticipatory rights in Tripoli was the only possible way of indemnification.²¹

He did not content himself with complaints behind Britain's back, but spoke in a similar vein to Lord Currie. On April 3, 1899 he proposed that a proper means of procedure would be for England and France to declare that they would not acquire territory or political influence in Tripoli or that Italy might arrange for a joint garrison with Turkey. He insinuated that the French had no objections to the Italians taking Tripoli, and asserted that only in the ways he suggested could a disturbance of Italy's relations with England be avoided.²²

His attempt to use the French lever soon struck a snag. The French government refused to make a written declaration confirming the attitude he had asserted it would take with respect to Tripoli. Nevertheless he persisted.²³ On April 10 he proposed the following project of a joint Anglo-French declaration:

Les Gouvernements de la République Française, de Sa Majesté Britannique, et de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, également soucieux de maintenir, dans l'intérêt de l'équilibre dans la Mer Méditerranée, le principe de l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, ont résolu, en vue de l'accord stipulé le 21 Mars 1899, entre la France et L'Angleterre, d'arrêter ce qui suit:—

¹⁸ Currie to Salisbury, January 18, 1899, B. D., I, 280-281.

¹⁹ Currie to Salisbury, November 4, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 194; Currie to Salisbury, April 4, 1899, *ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

²⁰ Saurma to Hohenlohe, March 29, 1899, G. P., XIV, 429.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 430-431.

²² Currie to Salisbury, April 4, 1899, B. D., I, 203-204.

²³ Currie to Salisbury, April 10, 1899, *ibid.*, p. 204.

Le Gouvernement de la République Française pour la région à l'est de la Tunisie et de l'Algérie, et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique pour la région à l'ouest de l'Égypte, s'engagent envers le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, à n'acquiescer ultérieurement ni territoire ni influence politique au nord du parallèle effleurant l'extrémité méridionale du Fezzan.

Il y aura pleine et entière liberté de commerce pour les routes caravannières venant du Lac Tchad et des régions avoisinantes et se dirigeant sur la Tripolitaine.²⁴

This request for a concession certainly did not err on the side of ambiguity. Had it been granted the Italian dream of a North African empire would have been an immediate certainty. It would also doubtless have served—it was evidently so intended—to quiet the storm of indignation in Italy. But unfortunately for the Italians' desires Lord Salisbury was not in a charitable mood. Rather his attitude was extremely legalistic. Both he and Lord Sanderson pointed out that the Anglo-French declaration did not pass on the rights of others north of 15 degrees North Latitude, since it had been worded in a negative way.²⁵ Baron De Renzis suggested that the British government could say publicly that they maintained their desire to act with Italy for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and that no opinion had been expressed on Turkish claims, but Salisbury would not budge from a definite refusal.²⁶

The British case rested plainly on the point that such an agreement as Canevaro was proposing was unilateral, although there was also legal ground in the fact that the phraseology of Canevaro contravened in fact if not in law British treaty pledges of Ottoman integrity. Publicly other reasons were given. At the very beginning of the controversy the *Times* could not understand how the Italians could have expected England to push into the Sahara in order to keep the door of Tripoli open for a possible disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Central Africa was a region far removed from the Mediterranean. In its opinion failure to agree with France there would not have strengthened Italy's moral

²⁴ Canevaro's memo., April 10, 1899, *ibid.*, p. 205.

²⁵ Salisbury to Currie, April 25, 1899, *ibid.*, p. 206.

²⁶ *Idem.*

right to Tripoli nor did the agreement surrender anything which Italy as an ally could claim that England should have defended.²⁷ This was a plain misunderstanding of the Italian position that Tripoli's importance depended upon keeping open its connections with the hinterland.²⁸

But this opinion of the *Times* received an official endorsement which seems to have been dictated by a fear of what France would do. In 1902 an inspired article stated that Italy's aloofness towards England—which by then had become apparent²⁹—was due to Salisbury's refusal to take up the cudgels for Italy when British interests were not affected.³⁰ In 1899, however, Salisbury contented himself with pointing out to the Italian ambassador that Great Britain and Italy had no right to discuss the future of a country whose ownership was not doubtful. The unilateral concession requested by the Italians could not be defended. Besides, it did not provide for the contingency of a threat to Tripoli from some third party at a time when Italy might be unable to assert her claims.³¹ The shaky internal and external situation of Italy at the time he made this remark, and Lord Currie's comment that Salisbury wanted to keep his hands free to checkmate France in Tripoli,³² furnish ample ground for his decision.

There were, however, two flaws in the British position. One was that despite the carefully worded negative character of the agreement of 1899 with respect to the hinterland of Tripoli, the dominant position of France and England in North Africa made binding in character any agreement that they might make and vitiated any rights which third parties might possess. The other, and perhaps the most important, was that the British point of view ran the risk of alienating Italy

²⁷ The *Times*, March 30, 1899, p. 7.

²⁸ See above, notes 10 and 11.

²⁹ See below, pp. 95-105.

³⁰ Anon, "The Marquis of Salisbury," *Quarterly Review*, CXCVI (1902), 664.

³¹ Salisbury to Currie, May 13, 1899, B. D., I, 206-207.

³² Wedel to Foreign Office, January 10, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 743-744.

and creating the possibility of a hostile combination in the Mediterranean.

But it must be admitted that, although later events proved this risk to be a great one, at the time it seemed slight. Lord Currie reported that French efforts to woo Italy by means of a visit of her fleet had made an unfavorable impression.³³ The Italian press, too, spoke unfavorably of the idea advanced by the French admiral that Italy and France should unite to dominate the Mediterranean.³⁴

Unfortunately for the British, Tripoli did not complete the story of Italian grievances. Just prior to the signing of the Anglo-French agreement regarding the Tripolitan hinterland Italian prestige received a severe blow in the struggle for China which many Italians believed that more British support would have avoided.

Italian interest in China was of slow development. During the period of Italian commercial expansion which followed unification a treaty of commerce and friendship was entered into with the "Flowery Kingdom."³⁵ In 1896 the Italian Geographical Congress demanded improved consular service and information about China,³⁶ but most Italians apparently shared the view expressed in the same year that Li Hung Chang's failure to visit Italy was a good thing in that it saved the money which would have been spent in his entertainment.³⁷ And as late as 1900 there were only 9 Italian business houses and 133 Italians in China.³⁸

Italian ambitions, however, began to grow after the seizure of Kiao-Chau by Germany, Port Arthur by Russia and Wei-Hai-Wei by England as well as Kwangchow by France had brought to a climax the movement entered upon after China's

³³ Currie to Salisbury, April 24, 1899, B. D., I, 205.

³⁴ The Times, April 21, 1899, p. 5.

³⁵ Stanley K. Hornbeck, *Contemporary Politics in the Far East*, p. 219.

³⁶ L. Nocentini, *Europa nell'Estremo Oriente e gli interessi dell'Italia in Cina*, pp. 188-189.

³⁷ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXV (1896), 354-355.

³⁸ *Emigrazione e colonie*, II, 94.

defeat by Japan in 1895.³⁹ In February 1898 an Italian cruiser was dispatched to China with the announced purpose of protecting Italian interests and promoting commerce.⁴⁰ Soon thereafter British and Italian interests cooperated to secure a railway and mining concession in the province of Shensi.⁴¹ But that a program of political expansion was being contemplated at the time seems belied by the statement of Visconti-Venosta in April 1898 that Italian interests did not justify the pursuit of a policy similar to that of other powers, although he did favor commercial penetration.⁴²

Naturally such a quietist policy did not suit the expansionists. Santini condemned the dispatch of the cruiser and the contemporaneous establishment of a new Italian consulate at Bangkok as insufficient.⁴³ Carlo di Rudinì, son of the former prime minister, argued that the fact that Italians were not feared by the Chinese would give them a great opportunity commercially when the Japanese indemnity was paid.⁴⁴

Expansionist ideas were given an opportunity for exercise in the *milieu* of the latter part of 1898. The brave and aggressive Canevaro replaced the prudent Visconti-Venosta at the foreign office. Three expansionist Crispians, Nunzio Nasi, Finocchiaro-Aprile and Alessandro Fortis, entered the ministry.⁴⁵ The cry went up from moderate circles that only Italy was being left out in Asia in which even Belgium was desirous of participation.⁴⁶ In July and December expansionists continued to point out commercial and political opportunities in the Far East.⁴⁷

³⁹ H. B. Morse, *International Relations of China*, III, ch. ii, pp. 101-124.

⁴⁰ A. P. C. D., DLXXIII, 4562-4564.

⁴¹ Nocentini, pp. 191-194; Mary Kibbe Allen, *The Relations of France and Italy, 1885-1915*, p. 159, unpublished Clark University thesis; Morse, III, 96-97; A. P. C. D., DLXXIV, 6159.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 6159-6160.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, DLXXIII, 4563-4564.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, DLXXIV, 6155-6158.

⁴⁵ Cilibrizzi, III, 88-89.

⁴⁶ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXVI (1898), 754-755.

⁴⁷ A. P. C. D., DLXXXV, 965-966, 970-971; *Esplorazione commerciale*, XIV (1898), 209-211.

Under such circumstances it was no wonder that Canevaro, who was proud of his successes in Crete and of completing the commercial treaty with France,⁴⁸ should seek fresh laurels in the Far East.⁴⁹ In November 1898 Ambassador De Martino was sent to demand a port on the Chinese coast.⁵⁰ The British government was approached and acquiesced in the idea provided that the Yangtze valley was not entered, China was willing, and no force was used.⁵¹ France and Germany acquiesced also,⁵² and Salisbury went so far as to promise diplomatic support.⁵³

Such a promise gave rise to the accusation at the time that he had fathered the enterprise.⁵⁴ But there is little ground for this accusation. When other powers, more inimical to England than Italy, were grabbing portions of China he could hardly say no to a friend. His promises of support and the conditions under which he gave them carefully limited British and Italian action. His expressed opposition to the use of force was in harmony with a similar statement he made to the Germans after they had taken Kiao-Chau.⁵⁵ Besides, the Italians did not contradict the statement of Undersecretary of State Broderick that Italian initiative was responsible for the action in China.⁵⁶

Salisbury's nod was enough for Canevaro. On February 28, 1899 the Italian ambassador presented a demand for a sphere of influence in the province of Ce-Kiang.⁵⁷ The Tsung-li-Yamen returned the note with the remark that since

⁴⁸ He said on December 15, 1898: "I can assure the chamber that relations between Italy and the other states of Europe have never been more friendly than they are today." A. P. C. D., DLXXXV, 1017.

⁴⁹ Another indication of his desire to play a leading part in Europe is to be found in his proposal that the ambassadors at Constantinople should give advice to the Sultan with respect to Macedonia. Marschall to Foreign Office, January 20, 1899, G. P., XII, 532. See also, *ibid.*, pp. 526-532.

⁵⁰ Cilibrizzi, III, 125-127; Morse, III, 124-125.

⁵¹ Salisbury to Currie, February 15, 1899, B. D., I, 40.

⁵² Morse, III, 124-125.

⁵³ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), LXVIII, 1321.

⁵⁴ *Mémorial diplomatique*, XXXVII (1899), 161.

⁵⁵ Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, January 12, 1898, G. P., XIV, 146.

⁵⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), LXVIII, 547.

⁵⁷ The Times, March 2, 1899, p. 5; A. P. C. D., DLXXXVII, 2935.

the demands which it contained could not be granted and since a refusal would endanger friendly relations, it would be better not to receive it.⁵⁸

The uncertain and unpractised hand of Canevaro now went awry. Orders were at once sent to Ambassador De Martino that he should demand satisfaction for this unprecedented insult.⁵⁹ At this moment, however, the British ambassador requested that England should be permitted to use her good offices.⁶⁰ Canevaro consented, but according to his story De Martino did not receive the changed instructions until after he had presented a four day ultimatum.⁶¹ As a consequence of this action he was recalled and his step disavowed lest, as Canevaro said, it should produce the impression that Italy was not acting in good faith.⁶² His recall caused the affairs of Italy to be placed in the hands of the British ambassador whose prompt departure for home created a good deal of alarm in Italy.⁶³

The climax of the Chinese affair just described came at the same time that the Anglo-French agreement regarding Africa was published. It happened also that the Pelloux ministry was in a shaky condition. In February proposals looking to entrusting the ministry with something like dictatorial powers had been coldly received.⁶⁴ And immediately after the Chinese and African débâcles opposition of the Centre had led the ministry to abandon a proposal to buy a cruiser from England.⁶⁵

Italian politicians could not be expected to neglect such an opportunity to indulge in their favorite indoor sport of overturning a ministry. Public opinion was ignorant concerning China and opposed to the enterprise.⁶⁶ But while full ad-

⁵⁸ Ibid.; Steed, I, 151.

⁵⁹ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVII, 2936.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ The Times, March 14, 1899, p. 5.

⁶⁴ Giolitti, *Memoirs of My Life*, pp. 127-129.

⁶⁵ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVIII, 3431-3438, 3472-3473.

⁶⁶ Giolitti, p. 129; M. Carli, *Il Ce-Kiang*, preface; *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXX (1899), 390-391.

vantage was taken of this factor the opposition laid the main emphasis upon national disgrace. Valle Angelo condemned acts of submission, even to a friend.⁶⁷ The republican Barzilai argued that the demands of Italian dignity were greater than those of friendship and attention to the caprices of England.⁶⁸ Ceriani-Mayneri asked why the government had not acted resolutely and without fear.⁶⁹ Bonin, formerly an undersecretary in the Rudini ministry, condemned the waste of Italian resources in China that were needed at home and the lack of an adequate preparation on the part of the government.⁷⁰

As a climax to these attacks upon the Chinese policy of the government Sonnino, Prinetti and others joined in a demand for statement of the intentions of the ministry.⁷¹ Canevaro in replying sought to show that he was but continuing a policy that had been initiated by the preceding ministry.⁷² But Pelloux would not stand behind him. Instead, he resorted to the time-worn device of resigning and, by sacrificing Canevaro and others, succeeded in reconstituting his ministry.⁷³

Thus the Chinese failure, which one writer remembered as perhaps the worst in the history of Italian diplomacy,⁷⁴ condemned Canevaro to retirement from public life. His policy of "resignation" had found no favor with the country,⁷⁵ and his statement that the affair involved no dishonor for the state and his pleas for publication of the relevant documents fall on deaf and obstinate ears.⁷⁶ Pelloux when tendering the resignation of his ministry pointed out that all, whether for or

⁶⁷ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVIII, 3592.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 3609.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 3629-3630.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 3618.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 3650-52.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 3652-53.

⁷³ Giolitti, pp. 127-129; Steed, I, 151; Michele Rosi, *L'Italia odierna*, part 3, p. 1986.

⁷⁴ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXXIII (1899), 179.

⁷⁵ Ibid., LXXXI (1899), 180.

⁷⁶ A. P. Senato, DCXXV, 41-42; A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 750, 807-815.

against the Chinese enterprise, concurred in "disapproving the method."⁷⁷

Such disapproval had effects on the temper of Anglo-Italian relations, some of which should be indicated. Despite Pelloux's statement that he had resigned to prevent a vote of the chamber which would tie the ministry's hands in the future,⁷⁸ in the eyes of most Italians the Chinese matter was liquidated with the fall of the ministry.⁷⁹ Still Francophiles could and did use this incident as an indictment of British policy which they said aimed at keeping Italy and France apart and which had been of no positive assistance to Italy.⁸⁰ But more significant than this was the fact that when the Boxer troubles broke out in China Italy followed a policy which was certainly not pro-English.⁸¹

Malta added its contingent to the troubles of 1899. Early in the year the British government proclaimed that in fifteen years the Italian language would cease to be the official language and made its use optional immediately for British citizens not Maltese who had cases in Maltese courts.⁸² These measures coincided with a struggle that the British governor was having with the educated Italian minority in Malta over local self-government and in enforcing a measure making the teaching of Italian optional in the public schools and university.⁸³ This minority naturally appealed to fellow Italians on the peninsula and in Sicily and added one more irritation to the grievances of Italy.⁸⁴

All these grievances were given a favorable atmosphere for development by the outbreak of the South African or Boer War. Diplomatically this meant that the powers could pursue "unchecked in different quarters of the globe their schemes

⁷⁷ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVIII, 3660-3661.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Nuova antologia (Series IV), LXXXI (1899), 753.

⁸⁰ A. P. C. D., DLXXXVIII (1899), 3722-3723.

⁸¹ See below, pp. 92-93.

⁸² Parliamentary Papers, A Report on the Political Condition of Malta, H. C. 287, pp. 5-18.

⁸³ Ibid.; Further correspondence concerning the Political Condition of Malta, Cd. 715 and 1660; Pinon, pp. 426-428.

⁸⁴ See below, pp. 88-89.

of colonial expansion."⁸⁵ In Italy it served to give an opportunity for enemies of England to make themselves heard, although the main line of division was political in character.⁸⁶ At the beginning only the ministerial *Perseveranza*, and the conservative *Corriere di Napoli* and *Corriere della Sera* were pro-English or fair to the British point of view.⁸⁷ The official *Popolo romano* was sympathetic towards the British,⁸⁸ but the radical *Secolo* of Milan filled its columns with hostile articles and anti-English cartoons.⁸⁹ The Catholic *Osservatore romano*, the Francophile and Rudini organ *L'Italie*, and the radical *Mattino* of Naples to a greater or less extent took the same side.⁹⁰ As time went on defeats lowered British prestige to such an extent that the conviction gained ground that England must adopt some methods to strengthen her army.⁹¹

Such was the *milieu* in which England and Italy inaugurated the years covering the turn of the century. Disappointment, shame and even a sense of disgrace had come to the Italians in association with or as a result of the acts of England. As for England she was engaged in a war which held the most dangerous possibilities. It was but natural then that Italy should take advantage of this to shake off burdensome restrictions should the opportunity present itself.

⁸⁵ Halévy, p. 111.

⁸⁶ Steed, I, 155.

⁸⁷ The Times, October 30, 1899, p. 6.

⁸⁸ *Mémorial diplomatique*, XXXVIII (1900), 98.

⁸⁹ Files for the period in the Library of Congress.

⁹⁰ *Mémorial diplomatique*, XXXVIII (1900), 98, 136; The Times, November 1, 1899, p. 5.

⁹¹ Currie to Salisbury, April 14, 1901, B. D., I, 283-284; Newton, Lord Lansdowne, p. 211.

CHAPTER VII

YEARS OF GROWING ANTAGONISM

The situation produced by the events of 1899 grew worse during the turn of the century. In every place where British and Italian interests met a definite coolness began to show itself. Italian policy under the direction of Visconti-Venosta gradually found a way alone as England remained aloof and Italian confidence recovered from the shocks received under Canevaro.

From 1899 through 1901 British opinions concerning Italy were sceptical and distrustful. It is true that Joseph Chamberlain was of the opinion that French hostility and financial weakness would anchor Italy to England in case of trouble,¹ and that his opinion was not an isolated one.² But for Lord Salisbury she was a negligible quantity.³ And the two leading newspapers of England, the *Times* and the *Daily News*, under the influence of the suspension of parliamentary government in Italy and the assassination of King Humbert at Monza in July 1900 were at one in thinking that the future of Italy was such as to arouse the greatest fear and anxiety.⁴ Such opinions, reflecting distrust and disdain, meant that for diplomatic purposes Italy had disappeared from England's calculations.

The character of the British and Italian ambassadors was not calculated to improve this situation. The Italian Baron Renzis di Montanero was mainly interested in literature.⁵ British affairs at Rome were in the hands of Lord Currie, who had arrived there in 1898 disgruntled over his failure at Constantinople.⁶ He was an aristocrat like most British

¹ Bulow's memo., November 24, 1900, G. P., XV, 417.

² See Roland Blennerhassett, "Great Britain and the European Powers," *National Review*, XXXV (1900), 39.

³ Note 1.

⁴ The *Times*, June 6, 1900, p. 7; *ibid.*, August 1, 1900, p. 9; *Daily News*, June 21, 1900, p. 6; *ibid.*, August 4, 1900, p. 4.

⁵ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XC (1900), 184.

⁶ Sir James Rennell Rodd, *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (Series III), p. 2.

diplomats of his time.⁷ Puffed up with the honors of his office he spent but little time in Rome, which he hated.⁸ His habit of giving orders hampered him in making his impressions felt at home.⁹

Under such circumstances and in such a *milieu* it was indeed fortunate that the conduct of Italian policy was in practised and experienced hands, those of the Marquis Emilio Visconti-Venosta. He had been the last foreign minister of the Right when it had lost power in 1876. Assuming office in 1896, he had helped inaugurate the rapprochement with France, laid down the principles of Italian Mediterranean policy in the Cretan episode, and checked Rudini's precipitancy in Africa.¹⁰ At the outset opposed to the Triple Alliance,¹¹ he was wise enough to recognize a *fait accompli*.¹² He was guided by the principle that Italy could live and develop only in a Europe where there existed a balance of power,¹³ and was convinced that Italy needed the friendship of England.¹⁴ He possessed a sound sense of the needs of Italy. Neither a profound pacifist nor a rabid nationalist, he followed a policy of conciliation and compromise so necessary if Italy was to find herself. In brief he possessed those abilities which led Prince Bülow to remark nearly thirty years afterward: "I do not believe that he ever did a stupid thing in any sphere during the whole of his life."¹⁵

The first and foremost problem which he faced was that of Northern Africa and more particularly that of Morocco. His accession to office had taken place during the excitement which had existed just after the conclusion of the Anglo-French

⁷ Ibid.; Robert T. Nightingale, "The Personnel of the British Foreign Office, 1815-1929," *American Political Science Review*, XXIV (1930), 310-331.

⁸ Walburga, Lady Paget, *In My Tower*, II, 334-335.

⁹ Rodd (Series III), p. 2.

¹⁰ See chs. iv and v.

¹¹ G. Salvemini, "La politica estera della Destra," *Rivista d'Italia*, XXVIII (1925), 73-74.

¹² Stead, I, 189.

¹³ Salvemini, p. 194, as cited in note 11, above.

¹⁴ Stead, I, 189.

¹⁵ Bülow, IV, 339.

agreement of 1899.¹⁶ The possibility existed that Spain might seek to regain her lost prestige by joining a league against England,¹⁷ and that French influence would be strengthened at Madrid.¹⁸ The outbreak of the Boer War gave every nation an opportunity to profit from England's predicament.¹⁹

But Visconti-Venosta was not one of the profiteers. In August 1899 he had pledged himself to the maintenance of the *status quo* in Morocco and to communication of any information which might point towards its alteration.²⁰ Acting in harmony with this idea he opened discussion of the Moroccan question with Lord Currie in November 1899, just after the Boer War broke out. It is probable that rumors of anti-English combinations had reached him.²¹ He remarked to Lord Currie that considerable apprehension existed in Italy lest some of the powers should seek compensation in the Mediterranean for the possible annexation by Great Britain of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. He was not aware of any German schemes in Morocco but, mentioning the possibility that France might occupy Touat, he asked what opposition England might offer to French interference with the integrity of Morocco.²²

It must be admitted that Lord Currie's answer was not entirely encouraging. He advised the Italian government to be watchful and rely upon their allies to meet every contingency in the Mediterranean, and remarked that it would be difficult to obstruct the occupation of Touat; but that it was the traditional policy of England to resist any attack upon the Mediterranean coast of Morocco.²³ Such a reply, it should be pointed out, left France free to roam at will in much of the interior of Africa which lay behind Tunis and Algeria.

¹⁶ See above, pp. 66-70.

¹⁷ B. D., VII, 1-2; Anderson, pp. 35 ff.

¹⁸ Wolff to Salisbury, August 14, 1898, B. D., II, 254-255.

¹⁹ Halévy, p. 111.

²⁰ Currie to Salisbury, August 20, 1899, B. D., II, 257.

²¹ Monson to Salisbury, October 24, 1899, B. D., I, 233-234; Stead, I, 152.

²² Currie to Salisbury, November 2, 1899, B. D., I, 235-236.

²³ Ibid. Touat lies close to the Moroccan frontier in the hinterland of Algeria.

The possibility that France might be let loose in the hinterland of Northern Africa did not suit Italian opinion or officials. In September 1899 a government-subsidized steamship service was established to Tripoli.²⁴ When France moved forward to occupy Touat in the spring of 1900 the *Stampa* of Turin—mouthpiece of Giolitti, the coming political boss of Italy—challenged her with a statement that a French occupation of Morocco would disturb the equilibrium of the Mediterranean.²⁵ At the same time the *Tribuna* became very much excited concerning French designs in the hinterland of Tripoli and on April 6, 1900 remarked that: "We would not wish that Italy should go to sleep, because the awakening to accomplished facts when there was no longer remedy could be fatal to the state and its institutions."²⁶ Visconti-Venosta feared that the question of Morocco was one which might sink the House of Savoy.²⁷ For Tripoli he was willing to put "the match to the powder barrel."²⁸

Such statements reveal the nervousness prevalent in Italy part of which was undoubtedly due to the shaky internal situation.²⁹ They also help to explain what Visconti-Venosta did. If his utterances are taken at face value he did not want to be pushed in the direction of a Tripolitan expedition.³⁰ Assurances to be sure came to him from Germany and Russia that France had no immediate designs upon Morocco,³¹ but there is evidence to show that the Italian government suspected that Salisbury's unchanging attitude with respect to Tripoli indicated an agreement with France over Morocco.³²

²⁴ F. Guicciardini, "Impressioni di Tripolitania," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXXVI (1900), 391-392.

²⁵ G. P., XVII, 299 footnote; quoted in *La Civiltà cattolica*, March 17, 1900, p. 755.

²⁶ *The Tribuna*, April 6, 1900, p. 1.

²⁷ Bülow to Münster, April 2, 1900, G. P., XVII, 300.

²⁸ Stead, I, 150.

²⁹ See above, pp. 31, 79.

³⁰ Wedel to Bülow, December 12, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 718.

³¹ Bülow to Hatzfeldt, May 14, 1900, G. P., XVII, 302-303; *ibid.*, p. 321, footnote.

³² The same suspicion occurred to the Germans. Lascelles to Salisbury, April 20, 1900, B. D., I, 257. It is possible that Broderick's denial of it, May 24, 1900, was intended for Italian consumption.

German advice to stay away from Salisbury on the question of Touat,³³ and her apparent acquiescence in French activities there,³⁴ were not encouraging. Clearly France must be approached to see what could be done.

The diplomatic situation existing between France and Italy was growing favorable to such a step. Delcassé was in power in France and in a position to fulfill his unofficial promise of 1899 to negotiate with Visconti-Venosta over Mediterranean problems.³⁵ A dispute over the boundary of the Red Sea possessions of the two powers had just been settled after ten years of negotiation.³⁶ Since Tunis and commercial questions were out of the way, only Tripoli and Morocco remained of immediate interest.

The Italian parliamentary situation likewise pointed in the same general direction. The Saracco ministry, which had been constituted in July 1900, was plainly a stop-gap.³⁷ Giolitti was already indicated as the coming man in Italy.³⁸ And if the *Tribuna* which had passed under his control was to be relied upon as speaking his sentiments, a Franco-Italian rapprochement was in the order of things.

On October 7, 1900 this organ demanded of the French if they were willing to give up their conception of a French Mediterranean.³⁹ Five days later it noted with satisfaction that the *Journal des Débats* disclaimed any French interest in Tripoli and observed in reply that Morocco interested Italy only in that it touched the Mediterranean.⁴⁰ And towards the end of the month it called the attention of the government to the truth of a statement that a union of France

Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), LXXXIII, 1102-1103. For British and Italian attitudes see Lansdowne to Currie, February 3, 1902, B. D., I, 288; Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, June 1, 1900, G. P., XVII, 317; Bülow to Tschirsky, June 5, 1900, *ibid.*, p. 318.

³³ Bülow to Hatzfeldt, May 14, 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 302-303.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Mévil, p. 121.

³⁶ Trattati, *ecc.*, I, 630-631; Salvemini, *La politica estera di Francesco Crispi*, pp. 72 ff.

³⁷ Walburga, Lady Paget, I, 335; Giolitti, pp. 140-148.

³⁸ Rodd (Series III), p. 6.

³⁹ *La Tribuna*, October 7, 1900, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, October 12, 1900, p. 1.

and Italy could control the Mediterranean and cut England off from the East.⁴¹ During the same month the *Stampa*, allegedly inspired by ministerial circles, stated that France had no designs upon Morocco.⁴²

But Italian diplomats were at heart not so sure about the matter as the publicists. Their military authorities were still strongly attracted to the old idea of a British pledge for the protection of Italian coasts in time of war.⁴³ The Anglophobe character of French public opinion pointed to the possibility of a war between England and France.⁴⁴ In this war Italy, owing to her proximity to France and to the yet unsettled problems of Tripoli and Morocco, might readily be involved. Consequently in September 1900 the Italians proposed that the British government should pledge itself to defend the coasts of Italy in case of an Anglo-French war.⁴⁵

As might have been expected the request met with a dignified and courteous refusal. Lord Salisbury pointed out that the British government was a friend of Italy and likewise desired the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, but that British policy depended upon public opinion in England.⁴⁶ Lord Currie, however, insisted that Italy's position in case of such a war should be carefully considered under the then existing European conditions.⁴⁷ But Lansdowne pointed out that there were strategical objections to such an agreement and that Italy's close connection with Germany constituted an obstacle.⁴⁸

Interpretations based upon coincidence of circumstance are always dangerous. But it is reasonable to assume that the

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1900, p. 1.

⁴² Quoted in *Il Secolo*, October 10, 1900, p. 1.

⁴³ Pribram, II, 85; Major von Chelius to Wedel, February 23, 1901, G. P., XVII, 688.

⁴⁴ Lee, I, 780-784.

⁴⁵ Lord Thomas Newton, Lord Lansdowne, pp. 211-213. Due to the editing of Currie's dispatch of September 28, 1900—B. D., I, 282—it is impossible to be more definite with respect to this proposal.

⁴⁶ Salisbury to Currie, October 12, 1900, B. D., I, 282.

⁴⁷ Newton, pp. 211-212.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 213. Lansdowne succeeded Salisbury at the Foreign Office on November 12, 1900.

failure to reach a binding agreement with England, coupled in point of time with a rift between England and Germany over Chinese policy,⁴⁹ exerted an influence in the direction of a rapprochement with France already indicated by other circumstances. At any rate on December 12 and 14, 1900 an exchange of notes took place between France and Italy which has been interpreted as giving France a free hand in Morocco in exchange for a similar Italian privilege in Tripoli and being a long step towards a complete rapprochement between these two powers.⁵⁰

As a matter of fact neither party was quite sure at the time that the note exchange meant these things. Just a few days before, Italy had entered into a naval understanding with her two allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, concerning the contingency of a war between the Triple and the Dual Alliance.⁵¹ Barrère felt sure that Italy could not move in Tripoli without active French cooperation.⁵² Visconti-Venosta, on the other hand, later insisted that he had intended only that France could act in Morocco just so far as proper precautions concerning her frontier would allow,⁵³ and his general policy was contrary to that of the break with England which Barrère wished.⁵⁴ But the conclusion of this agreement in the midst of a profound dissatisfaction with England created just such an extreme possibility, especially if less cautious hands should take charge of Italian affairs.

Similar caution characterized Visconti-Venosta's policy with respect to the Boer War. Traditionally his policy has been viewed as pro-British.⁵⁵ Serious objections arise to this point of view when the matter is investigated more closely.

At the outbreak of the Boer War England was isolated and

⁴⁹ See below, pp. 92-93.

⁵⁰ Fay, I, 145. The text of this exchange of notes may be found in Pribram, II, 240-244.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁵² Barrère, to Delcassé, January 10, 1901, Documents diplomatiques français (Series II), I, 21-22. Cited hereafter as D. D. F.

⁵³ Wedel to Bülow, January 19, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 747-748.

⁵⁴ Note 52, above.

⁵⁵ Ward and Gooch, III, 270-272; Steed, I, 159; National Review, XXXVI (1900), 20; Rodd (Series III), p. 257.

faced the possibility of a hostile European combination.⁵⁶ Many Italians thought that in this situation existed an opportunity for Italian profit. In December, 1899, Valle Angelo, a professed Anglophile, complained that Italy had never known how to derive any benefit from England's friendship.⁵⁷ About the same time Rome began to talk—apparently with the immediate approval of the Kaiser—to the effect that since England's consent was necessary to Italian expansion Italy should offer to garrison Malta, Gibraltar and Egypt in the hope that England would know how to pay for this service.⁵⁸ Alfredo Frassati, editor of the *Stampa*, urged that in this way Italy could break "the circle of iron which suffocates us in our sea."⁵⁹ The *Tribuna* approved of this propaganda, but was sceptical about the government taking advantage of this situation.⁶⁰ Naturally these ideas found no approval in clerical or radical circles.⁶¹

The British government considered the Kaiser's suggestion a friendly gesture.⁶² The Italians denied officially that England had made any such proposal,⁶³ and showed no enthusiasm for Frassati's scheme.⁶⁴ In fact it was too impossible for words and Italian incredulity showed itself in one statesman's remark that England could hardly be expected

⁵⁶ Ward and Gooch, III, 277-280; Lee, I, 761-773; Bourgeois et Pages, Les origines et les responsabilités de la Grande Guerre, pp. 285-288; Valentine Chirol, Fifty Years in a Changing World, pp. 285-287; Steed, I, 159; Monson to Salisbury, October 24, 1899, B. D., I, 233-234; Alfred L. P. Dennis, Adventures in American Diplomacy, ch. vii.

⁵⁷ A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 734.

⁵⁸ The Times, January 1, 1900, p. 5. Lee asserts that the whole idea was the Kaiser's. Lee, I, 764. According to the Kaiser's conversation with the British ambassador to Germany, the Kaiser approved the idea about the middle of January. Frassati's article cited in the next note appeared on January 1. Lascelles to Salisbury, February 9, 1900, B. D., I, 250.

⁵⁹ Alfredo Frassati, "Il momento di osare," Nuova antologia (Series IV), LXXXV (1900), 114.

⁶⁰ La Tribuna, January 3, 1900, p. 1.

⁶¹ The Times, January 1, 1900, p. 5; Il Secolo, January 1, 1900, p. 1; Rassegna nazionale, CXI (1900), 397-398.

⁶² Lascelles to Salisbury, February 10, 1900, B. D., I, 252-253.

⁶³ Popolo romano, quoted in Corriere mercantile, January 3, 1900, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Lascelles to Salisbury, February 10, 1900, B. D., I, 252-253.

to raise the hornet's nest of Egypt and the Mediterranean at the same time.⁶⁵

Visconti-Venosta, who was probably the statesman in question, confirmed this position in a public utterance on the same day that the Kaiser discussed the garrison idea with Sir Frank Lascelles, British ambassador at Berlin. Senator Vitelleschi had alluded flatteringly to the civilizing work of England and the debt which Italy owed her. He recognized that the possibility of a rift between England and Italy's allies would make Italy's position difficult, but urged that friendships were cemented only in times of difficulty.⁶⁶ Visconti-Venosta in reply merely pledged himself to maintain Italy's relations of traditional friendship with England. In view of Italy's great need for peace the Italian government desired no additional complications to those of South Africa.⁶⁷

The spirit of this canny policy dominated his entire attitude towards the Boer War. In March 1900 the presidents of the two South African republics offered peace on the basis of independence.⁶⁸ Italian republicans, radicals and clericals were for supporting this step⁶⁹ and the former presented *interrogazioni* to the Italian ministry.⁷⁰ Inasmuch as the British government refused to negotiate on this basis and no united front could be presented by the anglophobes of Europe,⁷¹ Visconti-Venosta's announced policy that circumstances were not favorable to such a *démarche* was acquiesced in without serious opposition.⁷² Circumstances thus allowed him to follow a policy which suited both the interests of England and of Italy.

⁶⁵ The Times, January 1, 1900, p. 5.

⁶⁶ February 8, 1900, A. P. Senato, DCI, 590-592.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 593-594; A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 750.

⁶⁸ Bierman to Foreign Office, March 10, 1900, G. P., XV, 524; B. D., I, 254, footnote.

⁶⁹ L'Italie, quoted in Mémorial diplomatique, XXXVIII (1900), 98; Il Secolo, March 4 and 15, 1900; The Times, March 5, 1900, p. 6.

⁷⁰ A. P. C. D., DC., 2244.

⁷¹ B. D., I, 254, footnote. For a summary of the situation see Scott to Salisbury, March 19, 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 255-256.

⁷² A. P. C. D., DC, 2244, 2987.

Diplomatic correctness was a little more difficult for him to follow in the Maltese question which entered a more delicate phase as his ministry progressed. In September 1899 General Luchino dal Verme, a follower of Crispi, characterized British measures limiting the use of the Italian language in Malta as worse conduct towards Italy than that of Austria.⁷³ Two months later Doctor Napoleone Colajanni charged that Chamberlain was trying to force respect for the language of a few adventurers with lyddite and dumdum bullets at the same time that he was suppressing the language of "sons of the soil" in Malta. It was strange that all the attacks on Italy's language were coming from Italy's official and unofficial allies, when respect for it was a test of their friendship and the ability of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁷⁴ Early in 1900 the Dante Alighieri Society inaugurated what proved to be an active interest in the matter by receiving the protest of a Maltese delegation,⁷⁵ and the *Nuova antologia* remarked: "The *Antologia* trusts that the English government will not wish to commit towards Italy an act so little friendly as that of abolishing Italian as the official language of the island."⁷⁶ Chamberlain was badly received when he visited Italy via Malta in the fall of 1900,⁷⁷ and *Il Secolo* charged that his visit had the purpose of inaugurating the use of English in Maltese tribunals "evidently in order to satisfy the greed of the trafficking Chamberlain not satiated by laurels gathered in South Africa."⁷⁸

This hostile attitude was inexplicable to the British. When H. Wickham Steed urged less strenuous measures in Malta, Governor Sir Francis Grenfell accused him of having been lobbied by the Italians,⁷⁹ and when a hostile council refused

⁷³ Luchino dal Verme, "Una escursione in Croazia," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXXIII (1900), 64. For the Austro-Italian situation, see Michels, pp. 106-122.

⁷⁴ A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 54-56.

⁷⁵ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXXVI (1900), 569.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Walburga, Lady Paget, II, 340-342.

⁷⁸ *Il Secolo*, November 9, 1900, p. 2.

⁷⁹ Stead, I, 180.

to vote the education budget he closed all the schools.⁸⁰ Chamberlain argued that the native language of Malta was not Italian, but Maltese. He anticipated that in a few years English would be more acceptable to the Maltese than Italian and minimized Maltese opposition as the work of a small minority.⁸¹

However, he was disabused concerning the Italian attitude on this question during the visit to Italy just referred to. Under the fear that Italian affairs might pass into hands less friendly to England, Steed arranged for a meeting between Sydney Sonnino, usual opponent of most Italian ministries, Visconti-Venosta and Chamberlain by means of a luncheon at Lord Currie's. Both came reluctantly. Sonnino feared that his unofficial capacity would prevent his being heard and that Chamberlain might not like frankness. Visconti-Venosta objected that he could say nothing officially, and if he spoke what he thought he might regret it and Chamberlain might resent it. Chamberlain as usual got off on the wrong foot by insulting the Jews in the presence of Sonnino whose ancestry was Semitic, but Steed's kick under the table saved him from a catastrophe. After the meal cigar smoke filled the room while the tobaccophobe Currie writhed in misery. Visconti-Venosta went into an adjoining room and busied himself in saving his trousers and dignity from Lady Currie's dog. Meanwhile the loud voices of Chamberlain and Sonnino sufficed in no way to calm the stormy atmosphere. But despite these untoward incidents the meeting closed amicably.⁸²

Chamberlain at once decided to satisfy the Italians. But at the time his explanations, based on the conception that it was ignorance that made the Italians angry, to the effect that he had simply placed English and Italian on an equal footing, did not one bit of good.⁸³ Consequently matters remained at an *impasse*.

Despite this the Italian government maintained a correct

⁸⁰ Grenfell, p. 161.

⁸¹ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), LXXXIII, 1276.

⁸² Steed, I, 161-164.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 165.

attitude. Chamberlain's visit coincided with some rather sharp questions directed to Visconti-Venosta in the Italian parliament. The motives of the British government in suppressing the Italian language in Malta were inquired into as well as Chamberlain's reported rough language to the Maltese.⁸⁴ Visconti-Venosta replied that the Maltese policy of England was one of simple internal import which in no way affected her foreign policy. The Italian parliament was not an opportune place in which to discuss English motives. He knew just how deeply Italy wanted to preserve her language and culture and understood fully how every contrary act offended this desire and created a bad impression in public opinion. But Italy could not intervene in the internal policy of another country when her positive rights were not violated, since under the same circumstances in other cases she would not admit such a right.⁸⁵

The legalistic tone of this reply and the outspoken sympathy for Italian susceptibilities reveal a disposition to seek—if means could be found—as in the matter of Tripoli and the Boer War, a real Italian orientation. Circumstances so willed it that in China such a tendency found a way for fuller expression than in the questions just discussed.

The first problem which Visconti-Venosta faced in this region was that of liquidating the Ce-Kiang incident of 1899. His first step had been to request and receive a free hand in the matter.⁸⁶ His task was rendered easier by the fact that Italians were disposed to forget the episode.⁸⁷ It was necessary, however, to present a bold front. Two cruisers were dispatched to Chinese waters and a spirited announcement came from official circles that Italy was not going to drop her program of industrial and commercial expansion in China.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ A. P. C. D., DCXIX, 1276-1277.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1277. For a similar statement made in 1899, see *ibid.*, DXCVIII, 56-57.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 746. For preceding details, see above, pp. 74-77.

⁸⁷ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), LXXXI (1899), 753-754. A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 749.

⁸⁸ *La Tribuna*, January 5, 1900, p. 2. *The Times*, August 5, 1899, p. 5, September 5, 1899, p. 3, September 30, 1899, p. 5.

Explanations, however, had been given by the Chinese government through the means of a special visit to Rome made by the Chinese minister in London.⁸⁸ During the fall of 1899 the adherence of the other European powers to the "Open Door" policy of the American Secretary of State John Hay rendered advisable a halt to any schemes like that of Canavaro.⁸⁹ Under such circumstances no demand was made for an occupation of San Mun and Visconti-Venosta openly proclaimed that he was acting in obedience to popular demand.⁹¹

But the Chinese problem was not solved so easily. Barely had this decision been announced when disorder became increasingly current in China. By mid-summer of 1900 all Europe was eagerly waiting for the rescue of foreigners imprisoned in the legations at Peking by hostile mobs.⁹²

The problem of relief produced a suggestion by Lord Salisbury which throws a great deal of light on the character of Anglo-Italian relations in this period. Influenced probably by the fact that Japan was close by and was angry over the concerted action of France, Germany and Russia following 1895,⁹³ Salisbury proposed that Japan should send 20,000 men to China for restoration of order.⁹⁴ Germany and Russia at once opposed, the latter going so far as to suggest that Salisbury contemplated a mandate for Japan.⁹⁵ It happened that on the same day Salisbury made this bold *démarche* Visconti-Venosta had instructed Count Lanza, Italian ambassador at Berlin, that Italy must act as one of the great powers in Chinese affairs.⁹⁶ The Russian revelation therefore found

⁸⁸ A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 748-49.

⁸⁹ Alfred L. P. Dennis, *Adventures in American Diplomacy*, pp. 187-192.

⁹¹ A. P. C. D., DXCVIII, 748-749.

⁹² Gretton, p. 552.

⁹³ Salisbury to Scott, July 15, 1900, B. D., II, 3-4; Valentine, *Chisolm, Fifty Years in a Changing World*, pp. 190-193.

⁹⁴ Salisbury to Scott, June 25, 1900, *Parliamentary Papers*, China No. 3, 1900, p. 75; Salisbury to Gough, June 26, 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

⁹⁵ Scott to Salisbury, June 8, 1900, *Parliamentary Papers*, China No. 1, 1901, p. 8; Bülow to Foreign Office, June 27, 1900, G. P., XVI, 22-23; Bülow's memo., June 28, 1900, *ibid.*, p. 91.

⁹⁶ Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, June 25, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 23-24.

the Italian foreign minister frowning.⁹⁷ In parliament he announced that Italy would look after her Chinese interests.⁹⁸ But he was careful to agree with the Austrians that such interests were minor in character.⁹⁹

The policy thus inaugurated, of a minor but independent line of conduct sagaciously alert to practical conditions, governed his dealings with England over China.¹⁰⁰ The two governments found common ground in opposing a Russian proposal that the allies should withdraw to Tientsin, which came when Peking was relieved.¹⁰¹ They differed only in details respecting a French proposal of October 1900 concerning peace terms.¹⁰² Acting under the information that Germany had sought the Anglo-German agreement of 1900, Visconti-Venosta quickly adhered.¹⁰³ During November and December 1900 he sought to follow Germany and keep in line with France by standing with them on the question of firm treatment of China.¹⁰⁴ Following the example of Russia, Belgium, and France he authorized the occupation of a concession at Tientsin,¹⁰⁵ despite the fact that Lord Lansdowne denounced this sort of action as undesirable and sought to give

⁹⁷ Visconti-Venosta to Morra, July 20, 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁹⁸ A. P. C. D., DCXVIII, 85-86; A. P. Senato, DCXXV, 716-718.

⁹⁹ Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, July 15, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 45.

¹⁰⁰ H. B. Morse, *International Relations of China*, for a general account, of the Boxer Rebellion.

¹⁰¹ Salisbury to Visconti-Venosta, September 14, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 110; Visconti-Venosta to De Renzis et al, September 5, 1900, *ibid.*, p. 105; Bülow to the Kaiser, August 30, 1900, G. P., XVI, 111.

¹⁰² Visconti-Venosta to Tornielli, October 6, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 136; Visconti-Venosta to Lanza, October 13, 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 141-142; Salisbury to Monson, October 16, 1900, *Parliamentary Papers*, China No. 5, 1901, p. 39.

¹⁰³ B. D., II, 15-16; Lanza to Visconti-Venosta, October 19, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 156, 165.

¹⁰⁴ Satow to Lansdowne, December 19, 1900, *Parliamentary Papers*, China No. 5, 1901, p. 142; Salvago-Raggi to Visconti-Venosta, December 16, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 196; Visconti-Venosta to Salvago-Raggi, December 18, 1900, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Hosea B. Morse, *The International Relations of China*, III, 325-326; Salvago-Raggi to Visconti-Venosta, November 20, 1900, D. D., No. 98, I, 185; Visconti-Venosta to Salvago-Raggi, January 21, 1901, *ibid.*, II, 8; Salvago-Raggi to Visconti-Venosta, January 19, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 58.

an international character to all such steps.¹⁰⁶ When the English view prevailed,¹⁰⁷ Prinetti, Visconti-Venosta's successor, instructed the Italian ambassador in Peking that following the example of Germany he was to get China's consent for the Italian concession.¹⁰⁸ Completing the picture of independence towards England, Visconti-Venosta allied himself with the Triple Alliance and France in supporting a large extension of legation quarters at Peking;¹⁰⁹ and the Italians in carrying out this plan seized some of the land belonging to the Maritime Customs Service of China, a procedure not to the liking of the British government and characterized as a grab by the head of the service referred to.¹¹⁰

In these ways Anglo-Italian relations became somewhat less cordial. At no place, North Africa, Malta or in China had the two been able to find a common terrain and the departure of Visconti-Venosta from office in 1901 left the situation on the knees of the gods.

¹⁰⁶ Lansdowne to Lascelles, January 22, 1901, B. D., II, 23-24.

¹⁰⁷ Dennis, p. 244.

¹⁰⁸ Prinetti to Salvago-Raggi, April 27, 1901, D. D., No. 98, II, 69.

¹⁰⁹ Satow to Lansdowne, November 25, 1900, Parliamentary Papers, China No. 6, 1901, pp. 88-90.

¹¹⁰ The Times, February 25, 1901, p. 5; Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XC, 45; Lansdowne to Satow, February 23, 1901, Parliamentary Papers, China No. 6, 1901, p. 88.

CHAPTER VIII

NEW HANDS AT THE HELM

The first year of the nineteenth century witnessed dynamic changes in Italian life and the entrance of a new spirit into the conduct of Italian foreign affairs. Under new leaders the Italians became more restive under what they termed "English neglect." Englishmen were slow to notice such a change and thought that Italians could be conciliated by minor concessions.

The new leaders of Italy in 1901 exemplified the new régime. The young king, Victor Emmanuel III, was deeply interested in politics.¹ He shared fully Italian feeling against England and took a gloomy view of her military weakness exposed in the Boer War.² He chose the irredentist Zanardelli to head his first ministry instead of Sonnino whom the English would probably have preferred.³ As one of his right hand men he had Giolitti who favored good relations with France and through his organ, *La Tribuna*, proclaimed that Italy should put her foreign affairs on a *do ut des* basis and cease to be a negligible quantity.⁴ At the head of the foreign office was Giulio Prinetti, an enterprising bicycle manufacturer of Milan, who desired to make Italian policy independent.⁵

These leaders reflected a spirit of activity, expansion and growth which was just making its appearance in Italy. Italy,

¹ Helen Zimmern, *Italian Leaders of Today*, pp. 31-34; Barrère to Delcassé, April 20, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 240.

² Currie to Lansdowne, January 5, 1902, B. D., I, 286; Currie to Lansdowne, April 14, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 283-284; Romberg to Bulow, November 7, 1903, G. P., XVII, 561-562.

³ Barrère to Delcassé, December 31, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 692; Steed, I, 166; Stillman, II, 725; Maximilian Claar, "Die Abkehr Italiens vom Dreibund und das Kabinett Zanardelli," *Europäische Gespräche*, VIII (1930), 430-433.

⁴ Giolitti, p. 182; *La Tribuna*, November 12, December 20, 1900, April 11, December 15, 1901.

⁵ Rodd (Series III), pp. 5, 24; Claar, p. 433; *Giornale d'Italia*, October 24, 1903, p. 1.

it seemed to many, had attained the nadir of national disgrace in the assassination of King Humbert at Monza in July 1900; but a new wave of hope greeted his successor.⁶ National finances improved as funds returned from abroad and the treasury showed a surplus.⁷ Italian cotton goods manufacturers began to compete abroad.⁸ Awakening to the needs of Italians beyond the seas the government assumed the duty of caring for their welfare.⁹ The Dante Alighieri Society for the promotion of interest in the Italian language expanded its activities by establishing units at Smyrna, Aleppo and Tripoli at the same time that it sought to finance itself by a government-sanctioned lottery.¹⁰ Italian interest in Tripoli and Albania translated itself into the establishment of schools and commercial agencies across the Adriatic and of a post-office at Benghazi flanked by consular posts at Derma and Tripoli.¹¹ The keynote of the entire movement was struck in the opening address of the inaugural session of the School for Diplomatic and Colonial Affairs in 1901. Dr. Vincenzo Grossi then pointed out that it depended upon the cultured and energetic sons of Italy to determine whether Italy remained a small nation lost in a corner of the Mediterranean, or became a great one expanding her language and culture over two continents.¹²

The first opportunity for the new spirit to display itself towards England occurred early in 1901. The Duke of Norfolk, formerly a member of the Salisbury ministry, at the head of a band of pilgrims visiting the pope, expressed a wish

⁶ Helen Zimmern, "Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy," *Fortnightly Review*, LXXV (1901), 492 ff.

⁷ Barrère to Delcassé, December 10, 1901, D.D.F. (Series II), I, 662-663; Nitti, *Il capitale straniero in Italia*, p. 78.

⁸ Great Britain, *Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual*, 1901, No. 2390, p. 8; *ibid.*, No. 2468, p. 4.

⁹ Foerster, pp. 475-478.

¹⁰ *Emigrazione e colonie*, II, 18, 27, 296; "La Dante Alighieri ad Udine," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXVIII (1903), 420-421.

¹¹ A. P. C. D., DCLVI, 5805-5806; *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XCIV (1901), 749-751; *Bollettino del ministero degli affari esteri*, 1901, pp. 185-186, 391.

¹² Vincenzo Grossi, *Politica dell'emigrazione e delle colonie*, p. 32.

for the return of the temporal power.¹³ Lord Currie, then British ambassador, attended a semi-official reception at the Duke's hotel at which it was reported that the health of the pope had been drunk while that of the Quirinal had been ignored.¹⁴ A special guard was placed around the Duke's hotel,¹⁵ and the Rudinian *L'Italie* charged that the Duke had forgotten the claims of hospitality and wounded Italian feelings.¹⁶ *Il Secolo* spread the report that the date of the Duke's utterances had been specially fixed for the Queen's birthday and the eve of the commemoration of Victor Emmanuel II in order that his words might have the greatest effect.¹⁷ The official *Tribuna* esteemed his words an offense to the intangible rights of Italy, but sought to calm the public by printing condemnatory remarks culled from English newspapers.¹⁸ Despite Currie's satisfactory explanations to the Italian government¹⁹ rumors of his recall circulated which had some basis in fact,²⁰ and Barrère hoped that the affair had produced a coldness in Anglo-Italian relations which was not confined to mere expressions of opinion.²¹

As a matter of fact the Italian reaction to the Duke of Norfolk was but symptomatic of a feeling of irritation which displayed itself on all sides. Italians objected to descriptions of Italy appearing in the English press and resented English criticism of their claims in China.²² Radicals argued that England was decadent and that her conservative policy differed from that of liberal Italy.²³ German attacks upon Chamberlain were reprinted in the radical papers and in the semi-official *Fracassa*.²⁴ *Il Secolo* convinced itself that Eng-

¹³ *L'Italie*, January 10, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Il Secolo*, January 10, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁶ *L'Italie*, January 10, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Il Secolo*, January 10, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁸ *La Tribuna*, January 10, 11, 12, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Il Secolo*, January 12, 1901, p. 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, January 14, 1901, p. 2; Rodd (Series II), p. 2.

²¹ Barrère to Delcassé, February 20, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 112.

²² *The Times*, May 29, 1901, p. 6.

²³ *Il Secolo*, June 17, 1901, September 7, 25, p. 1.

²⁴ *The Times*, November 5, 1901, p. 3.

lishmen preferred pessimistic accounts of Italian circumstances.²⁵ *Nuova antologia* accused Edward C. Strutt, who had written an article describing peasant distress in Apulia as permanent in character, of having misjudged conditions in that section.²⁶

It was but natural that such a state of mind should have diplomatic repercussions. In April 1901 the Italian fleet made a ceremonial visit to the French harbor of Toulon during which the *Tribuna* announced that Italy was no longer a negligible quantity.²⁷ Rumors at once appeared that France had made concessions to Italy in Tripoli, and the Germans suggested that England should pay more attention to Italy lest Italy's allegiance to existing alliances should become doubtful.²⁸

Parliament likewise interested itself in the state of Anglo-Italian relations. On June 8, 1901 the Anglophile Guicciardini challenged the ministry with the hope that the Maltese controversy and the Anglo-French agreement of 1899 had not weakened Italian ties with England.²⁹ Three days later the Crispian Gaetani di Laurenzana accused Prinetti of having lost the Mediterranean agreement which had linked England and Italy in Crispi's day.³⁰ The Francophile Guerci, however, spoke more boldly. He regretted that Tunis had made Italians forget French aid in unification and concluded by saying: ". . . and I reflect upon our profitless friendship for England who led us into Africa to stand guard for her at Kassala and in compensation only put a monument there for our dead, who called us into China in order to leave us there isolated, and who combats each day, just like Austria, Italian tendencies in the island of Malta."³¹

Prinetti was guarded in his reply, but his attitude was adjusted to the atmosphere of complaint and recrimination. He

²⁵ *Il Secolo*, June 17, 1901, p. 1.

²⁶ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XCIV (1901), 739-741.

²⁷ *La Tribuna*, April 11, 1901, p. 1.

²⁸ Currie to Lansdowne, April 14, 1901, B. D., I, 283-284.

²⁹ A. P. C. D., DCXXII, 4900.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4994.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5008-5009.

remarked that no important negotiations had taken place recently with England, but that "the relations which exist between the two countries authorize in us the conviction that should occasion present itself the former relations of friendship based upon a sincere and fair respect for reciprocal interests would always appear sound."⁸² Privately he went much further than this confession that relations with England were inactive. On June 25, 1901 he went so far as to suggest to Barrère that he might have to find support in a continental combination against the maritime preponderance of England.⁸³

This picture of an eager, expansionist and resentful Italy, however, should not be overdrawn. Friends of England were still abundant. The conservative *Perseveranza* of Milan contested the charge that England was decadent.⁸⁴ The *Gazzetta di Venezia* thought continued agitation over Malta aided only the French.⁸⁵ Pasquale Villari, who as president of the Dante Alighieri Society was at the head of Italian agitation respecting the language question in Malta, became alarmed at the rise of irredentism in Malta and urged moderation upon the Italian press as more effectual than rash words.⁸⁶ The boastful *Tribuna* argued that England needed Italy and when articles appeared in the *National Review*, urging concessions to Italy, it was apparently grateful, though inclined to be sarcastic.⁸⁷ Its correspondent in London hailed the publication of King and Okey's *Italy Today* as the salutation of friends to the perplexed Italian wandering in the solitude of Anglo-Saxon indifference.⁸⁸ Prinetti, himself, as events later showed, confirmed the opinion of Rodd that he was using a barrage of complaints to extract concessions from England.⁸⁹

⁸² Ibid., pp. 5169 ff.

⁸³ Barrère to Delcassé, July 2, 1901, D.D.F. (Series II), I, 371.

⁸⁴ Quoted in *L'esercito italiano*, September 4, 1901, p. 1.

⁸⁵ Quoted in the *Times*, August 28, 1901, p. 3.

⁸⁶ "La Dante Alighieri a Verona," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XCVI (1901), 7-18.

⁸⁷ *La Tribuna*, November 12, 1900, December 12, 1901, p. 1.

⁸⁸ Ibid., June 21, 1901, p. 1. ⁸⁹ Rodd (Series III), p. 3.

But great concessions on the part of England were not in the order of things in 1901, due more than anything else to the persistence of pessimistic opinions of Italian strength and capacity. King and Okey in their description of Italy pointed out that the outward appearance of corruption, misgovernment and political apathy concealed a rejuvenated Italy, but that an alliance with her was of doubtful value.⁴⁰ Miss Helen Zimmern considered Italy of no influence in the affairs of Europe.⁴¹ W. J. Stillman, former *Times* correspondent in Rome, thought Italy had "political caries,"⁴² and his newspaper remarked that Italy had no statesmen like those who had succeeded Cavour.⁴³ Steed, its contemporary correspondent at Rome, described the Zanardelli ministry as one composed of politicians with the exception of Prinetti, who was ignorant.⁴⁴ Giolitti had a past to which it was not desirable to refer, and Zanardelli was nothing but a doctrinaire liberal.⁴⁵

British diplomatists acted in harmony with this sceptical spirit. During the negotiations for an Anglo-German alliance which took place during 1901, one of the objections which the British offered to the German proposal that England should join the Triple Alliance was the burden of defending Italy in case she should have a war with France or Spain.⁴⁶ And during December 1901, in what proved to be the last of such negotiations between England and Germany, Lord Lansdowne proposed that the two powers should enter into an agreement pledging each government to support the *status quo* on the shores of the Mediterranean, Adriatic,

⁴⁰ Bolton King and Thomas Okey, *Italy Today*, preface and pp. 299-301.

⁴¹ Helen Zimmern, "Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy," *Fortnightly Review*, LXXV (1901), 498.

⁴² Stillman, II, 711.

⁴³ *The Times*, June 4, 1901, p. 9.

⁴⁴ *The Times*, February 20, 1901, p. 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, May 16, 1901, G. P., XVII, 58; Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, May 17, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 59; Lansdowne's memo., May 24, 1901, B. D., II, 64-65; Salisbury's memo., May 29, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

Aegean and Black seas.⁴⁷ Had such an understanding been reached Italy's budding aspirations in Tripoli and Albania would have suffered an untimely nipping, although Lansdowne had Germany and Russia in mind when he made the above mentioned proposal.

A fitting climax to the dissatisfaction in Italy and of scepticism and blindness in England towards Italy's new spirit and needs was furnished by an aftermath of the Kassala episode.⁴⁸ It will be remembered that only the northern boundary of Eritrea had been accurately delimited in December 1898 and that the angle about Kassala was still undetermined.⁴⁹ The boundaries with Abyssinia of both the Sudan and Eritrea were also undetermined.⁵⁰ Both the Sudan and Eritrea were undeveloped in an economic sense.⁵¹ Thus both England and Italy had to begin at the beginning.

A clash of economic interests soon developed. In his annual report for 1898 Lord Cromer recommended the construction of a railroad from Abu-Haraz to Gedaref, Kassala and the Red Sea in order that Egypt might be provided with cheaper grain.⁵² This recommendation contained a threat to Eritrea whose main resource was the transit trade of Massowa. Italian colonialists began to talk of a railroad from Massowa to Kassala.⁵³ General Wingate thereupon urged the improvement of means of communication between Egypt and Western Abyssinia.⁵⁴ Italian merchants became aroused by the falling off of trade at Massowa due in part to the proposed establishment of a customs barrier against Italian goods at Kassala.⁵⁵

⁴⁷ Lansdowne's memo., December 12, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 79.

⁴⁸ See ch. iv.

⁴⁹ See above, pp. 50, 63.

⁵⁰ Hertset, II, 620-622; Rodd (Series II), pp. 167-168; Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), LXXIX, 1527; C. Rossetti, *Storia diplomatica dell'Etiopia durante il regno di Menelik*, II, p. 248.

⁵¹ Sir Auckland Colvin, *The Making of Modern Egypt*, pp. 361-363; Mondaini, Part 1, pp. 129-134.

⁵² Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 3, 1899, pp. 3-4.

⁵³ Anon, "Nell'Africa anglo-egiziana," *Esplorazione commerciale*, XIV (1899), 251-252.

⁵⁴ Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 1, 1901, pp. 84-85.

⁵⁵ Ferdinando Martini, *Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea, 1898-1899*,

This tempest in a teapot was soon over. Cromer dropped his plan for the Abu-Haraz railway in favor of one from Berber to Suakin.⁵⁶ As for the proposed customs barrier, Italians insisted that according to Article IV of the Anglo-Italian protocol of 1891 they were entitled to free passage of goods from Kassala to Metemma and to a preferential commercial régime.⁵⁷ But these arguments were quieted by the temporary agreement of August 1899 that Italian goods should enter the Sudan upon the same basis as in Egypt while on transit goods a drawback was to be allowed. On Sudanese imports into Eritrea the regular Italian colonial tariff was to apply.⁵⁸

Boundaries proved much more difficult. Under the evacuation agreements of December 1897 the protocol of 1891 had been adopted as governing jurisdictional matters on the Sudan-Eritrean boundary.⁵⁹ In November 1899 Mr. Rodd and Visconti-Venosta agreed that formal delimitation should be made by the authorities on the spot.⁶⁰ But in the spring of 1900 a mutiny broke out among troops in the Sudan⁶¹ and the question became complicated by an Anglo-Egyptian occupation of Gera, to the south of Kassala.⁶² During the same summer the Italian government reached an agreement with Abyssinia that the western part of the southern boundary of Eritrea should start at Tomat and extend to Todluc.⁶³ This line created a salient in the protocol boundary of 1891 which interfered with plans for eastward expansion and communications between Kassala and Gedaref.⁶⁴ Consequently the

p. 27; Parliamentary Papers, The Trade and Shipping of Africa, 1899, Cd. 9223, pp. 35-36.

⁵⁶ Ibid., Egypt No. 1, 1900, p. 52; *ibid.*, Egypt No. 1, 1902, p. 57.

⁵⁷ A. P. C. D., DCXX, 3039; note 53, above.

⁵⁸ A. P. C. D., DCXX, 3039; *ibid.*, DXCVIII, 800.

⁵⁹ Trattati, ecc., I, 568-569.

⁶⁰ Rodd (Series II), pp. 259-263. Interview of Martini in *Corriere mercantile*, October 25, 1900, p. 3.

⁶¹ Rodd (Series II), pp. 271-272.

⁶² Luigi Mercatelli, "Il confine nord ovest dell'Eritrea," *La Tribuna*, October 31, 1900, pp. 1-2.

⁶³ D. D., No. 101, p. 8.

⁶⁴ See map, p. 100, and below, pp. 102-103.

Anglo-Egyptian authorities asked for the cession of this salient.⁶⁵

The problem created by this request proved hard to manage. British diplomats soon complained that the Italian attitude was the reverse of neighborly and that Martini, newly appointed governor of Eritrea, was intractable and animated by a spirit of chicane.⁶⁶ On the other hand Italians considered the British hardfisted and grasping, and lacking in liberality.⁶⁷ Rumors of their demand leaked out and it was reported that Martini had resigned rather than yield a concession which Visconti-Venosta was understood to favor.⁶⁸ The *Tribuna* viewed with alarm such limitation of Italy's territory and insisted upon the enlargement rather than the elimination of the Tomat salient.⁶⁹ Martini knew nothing of the region involved,⁷⁰ but announced that he was not going to yield to the land hunger of Great Britain.⁷¹ Consequently formal delimitation was carried out in the spring of 1901.⁷² Lord Lansdowne, having denied Italy's wishes for protection of her coasts, was inspired with a desire to meet her on minor points.⁷³

This delimitation had not been carried out when fresh troubles arose. The Italians learned that the British government without consulting them had in the course of negotiations with Abyssinia asked for a Sudanese boundary line extending from Lake Tsana to Todluc.⁷⁴ This proposal threatened two caravan routes leading from Abyssinia into Eritrea,⁷⁵ and two Italian gold mining concessions in Abys-

⁶⁵ See above, note 62.

⁶⁶ The Times, May 29, 1901, p. 8.

⁶⁷ Ibid. Newton, pp. 211, 212.

⁶⁸ Il Secolo, October 16, 1900, p. 2.

⁶⁹ See above, note 62.

⁷⁰ Martini, Relazione sulla colonia Eritrea, 1900-1901, p. 8.

⁷¹ Corriere mercantile, October 25, 1900, p. 3.

⁷² D. D., No. 101, p. 7.

⁷³ Newton, p. 213.

⁷⁴ Gabre Negus (R. Perini), "L'Eritrea e i suoi nuovi confini," Rivista moderna, politica e letteraria, July 1902, pp. 111-112; Bericht von Graf von Wedel, November 27, 1901. I am indebted for this report from the German archives to Professor Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

sinia.⁷⁶ Governor Martini, as a consequence of a trip to Tomat early in 1901, had come to the conclusion that Eritrea's economic future lay in cultivating markets to the south rather than those lost in the west by cession of Kassala to the British in 1897.⁷⁷ Protests were at once forthcoming from the Italian government and some tension was created when Lord Currie resorted to sharp language.⁷⁸

The problem thus was presented to the British of whether it would be wise to insist upon the line they were seeking. Control of the western highlands of Abyssinia offered military security for the Egyptian Sudan.⁷⁹ From them came the waters which were intended for use in making the Sudan pay for its own redemption from the Mahdi.⁸⁰ To some the region had commercial advantages.⁸¹ But Menelik was suspicious and Lord Cromer came to the conclusion that these suspicions made it unwise to go too far with respect to Lake Tsana.⁸² About the same time Sir William Garstin, who had made a survey of the irrigation question in the Sudan, came to the conclusion that the Sudan was not ready for irrigation.⁸³ Mr. James Rennell Rodd, British agent at Cairo, believed that Abyssinia had small commercial value.⁸⁴ Colonel Harrington, representative at Addis Abeba, was of the opinion that joint action by all powers interested in Abyssinia was preferable to strife for exclusive influence.⁸⁵ Besides, as was pointed out at the time, a French-controlled or hostile Abyssinia was a menace to the interests of both England and

⁷⁶ Rossetti, pp. 251-255.

⁷⁷ F. Martini, *Relazioni sulla colonia Eritrea, 1900-1901*, A. P. C. D., DCXLI, documenti, XVI, pp. 8-10.

⁷⁸ Bericht von Graf von Wedel, November 27, 1901.

⁷⁹ Oreste Baratieri, "Les Anglais au Soudan et la question d'Abyssinie," *Revue des deux mondes*, CLI (1899), 391.

⁸⁰ Sir Auckland Colvin, *The Making of Modern Egypt*, p. 402.

⁸¹ Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 1, 1901, pp. 84-85.

⁸² Cromer to Lansdowne, June 19, 1901, Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 2, 1901, p. 5.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 56.

⁸⁴ Rodd (Series II), pp. 172, 182.

⁸⁵ Geoffray to Delcassé, November 9, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 578-579.

Italy.⁸⁶ Under such circumstances the way to accommodation lay open.

In November 1901 a conference was held at Rome in which Rodd, Gleichen, Harrington, Martini and officials of the Italian colonial office took part, as well as Colonel Cicciodicola, Italian representative at Addis Abeba.⁸⁷ Assured by the Colonel of Menelik's acquiescence,⁸⁸ it was agreed that Italy should give up the Tomat salient. In return for her removal from the Atbara she was to receive the advantage that her commerce would derive from a Sudan-Abyssinian boundary line drawn west of Nogara and the trade route from Eritrea to Gondar. Egypt was to cede to Italy a sliver of territory between the line Todluc-Ombrega and new line drawn from Abu Gamal southward, while British representatives were to seek for the cession to Italy by Menelik of a portion of the Cunama region.⁸⁹ At the same time a commercial agreement was entered into by which Italy was given favored nation treatment for imports into the Sudan from Eritrea. Sudanese-Eritrean trade in native products was placed under a five per cent tariff, but Italian cotton goods and sugar were protected from competition in Eritrea by the application of the Italian colonial tariff.⁹⁰

This set of agreements practically ended Anglo-Italian differences in this region, although one point of friction remained. The Sudanese officials wanted to use the waters of the Gash for irrigation around Kassala.⁹¹ At the time, however, while the Italians had no plan for their use, they did not want to surrender any possibilities. Consequently they would do no more than promise to observe the principles of good neighborliness in the use of the waters of this stream.⁹²

⁸⁶ A. B. Wylde, *Modern Abyssinia*, p. 13.

⁸⁷ Rodd (Series II), p. 182; Bericht von Graf von Wedel, November 27, 1901.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Trattati, ecc., I, 656-657.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 658-664.

⁹¹ The Kassala district was then dependent upon the Gash flood which came down from the hills of Eritrea every year. *Parliamentary Papers, Egypt No. 1, 1902*, pp. 73-74.

⁹² Trattati, etc., I, 665-666. The attitude of the Italians is de-

The consent of Menelik to the agreement made in November was secured in the following spring. By a treaty between England, Egypt, Italy and Abyssinia the British received Gallabat, the elimination of the Tomat salient, and a pledge from Menelik that he would not construct any irrigation works on the Sobat, Blue Nile or Lake Tsana without the consent of the Sudan and England. They also acquired the right to connect Sudan and Uganda by a railroad through Abyssinian territory and the concession of a commercial station at Itang on the Baro. Italy received what she had been promised: slight rectifications of her frontier with Abyssinia and the hope for commercial profit from Northern Abyssinia.⁹³

This minor negotiation represented all the progress which was made in 1901 towards the promotion of better relations between England and Italy. Such had been the object undoubtedly of the British negotiators.⁹⁴ But Prinetti cared little for Africa,⁹⁵ and the main causes of Anglo-Italian irritation lay in the Mediterranean and not in Northeast Africa. Besides, the fact that in this local agreement England had made the greatest concessions from her original position may have made it seem profitable to Prinetti to continue aggrieved.⁹⁶

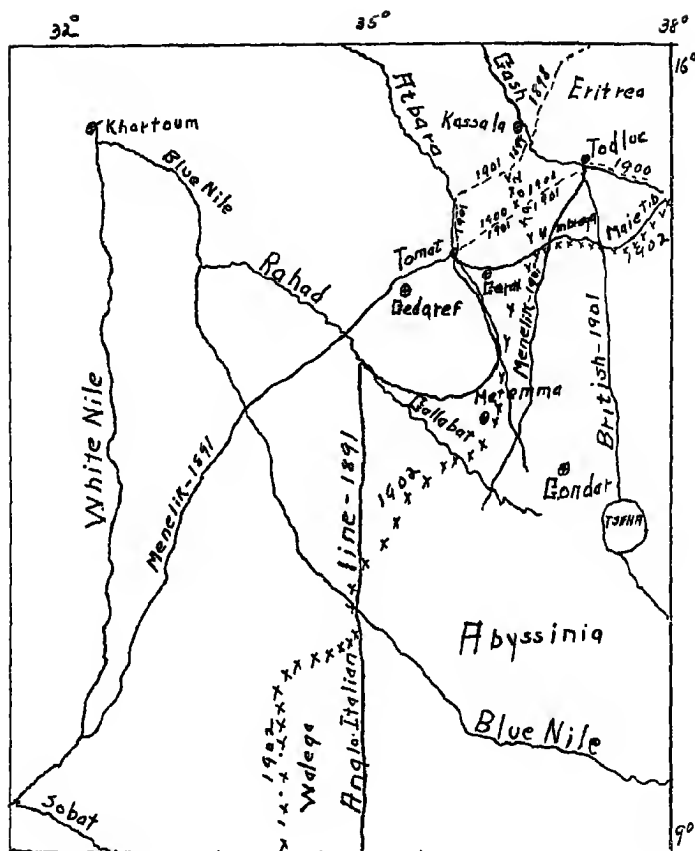
duced from the foregoing citation and from the fact that no plans were made until 1907 to use the Gash. For these plans see Nicola Coletta, *Sulla utilizzazione a scopo di irrigazione delle acque del fiume Gasc nella colonia Eritrea*.

⁹³ *Trattati, ecc.*, I, 686-690.

⁹⁴ Newton, p. 213; Rodd p. 380; Lansdowne's memo, December 19, 1901, B. D., II, 82.

⁹⁵ A. P. C. D., DCXXII, 5075; A. P. Senato, DCXXVII, 2090.

⁹⁶ See page 102, above, for England's original position.



KEY TO MAP ON SUDAN-ABYSSINIAN-ERITREAN BOUNDARY

Line, Toduc to the southeast of Gallabat, indicates the greatest concession Menelik was willing to make the British. The line, Toduc to Lake Tsana, shows the boundary desired by the British. The line, Tomat to the White Nile, illustrates roughly the extent of territory claimed in 1891 by Menelik. The line, Tomat to the west of Gallabat and south to 35° East Longitude and 9° North Latitude, is the demarcation line of the Anglo-Italian protocols of 1891. The symbol ---- indicates the boundaries between the Sudan, Abyssinia and Eritrea which had been agreed upon prior to the settlement of 1902. The symbol x x x indicates the settlement of 1902.

CHAPTER IX

RECONCILIATION

While Italy was feeling the guidance of new hands and the influence of a new spirit, forces of transformation were at work in England. Lord Salisbury was still prime minister, but his place at the foreign office had been taken in the fall of 1900 by the Marquis of Lansdowne. In January 1901 Queen Victoria died and Edward VII reigned in her stead. Not all the changes which came with the turn of the century can be attributed to these new personalities. But it was under them that events forced an alteration of the position of "splendid isolation" which had for so long been England's boast.

When they came to power they found England very uneasy. Widespread defects in the military establishment had been exposed by the strain of the South African War.¹ Foreign competition and other causes had produced and were producing great losses for British business men.² It was popular to demand a government of business men,³ and Mr. Chamberlain was considered "the type of ruler required."⁴ And the unrest spreading to the masses showed itself in the stoning of Lloyd George in December 1901.⁵

It was natural that the uncertainty in public circles should center for a time and to a great extent on the problem of England's naval power and diplomatic position. In January 1901 the *Times* stated that it was no time to abate naval preparations in view of the deficiency of both the Channel and Mediterranean fleets.⁶ Admiral Fisher, who was afraid of a continental combination of France, Russia and Germany, encouraged Arnold White to conduct propaganda in the

¹ Gretton, pp. 554-555.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 555-559, 569-571.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 555.

⁴ Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire*, p. 129.

⁵ Gretton, pp. 583-584.

⁶ *The Times*, January 22, 1901, p. 9.

Daily Mail for putting both fleets on a war footing.⁷ Articles in the *Fortnightly*, *National Review* and *Nineteenth Century* argued that the French and Russian fleets and naval bases in the Mediterranean were superior to the British and that the Italian fleet, the only possible ally, was helpless.⁸ Mr. White went so far as to write a book in which he said: "After holding the command of the sea unchallenged for the better part of a century, Britain has lost it, with the silent acquiescence of our rulers."⁹ Mr. Archibald S. Hurd pointed out that these alarmists were including the northern fleet of France in their Mediterranean figures,¹⁰ but even he admitted that control of the seas might be lost if a closer watch were not kept on France, Russia and Germany.¹¹ The latter, he believed, would hold the balance of power in European waters within a decade unless something more than the naval strength of France and Russia were taken as a standard.¹² Isolated Britain, in his opinion, had assumed great obligations which entangled her in every portion of the world.¹³

British naval authorities took this isolation and clamor seriously. In August 1901 the government asked an urgent appropriation to construct a breakwater and increase the stocks of coal at Malta.¹⁴ During the next year the number of battleships in the Mediterranean was increased from eight to thirteen.¹⁵ At the same time joint manoeuvres of the Mediterranean and Channel fleets were instituted and a Naval War College established.¹⁶

The year was also a troubled one for British diplomats.

⁷ Admiral R. H. Bacon, *The Life of Lord Fisher of Kilverstone*, I, 136-141; Lord Fisher, *Memories*, p. 96.

⁸ H. W. Wilson, "The Admiralty vs. the Navy," *Nineteenth Century*, XLIX (1901), 416-430; Willoughby Verner, "A Fool's Paradise," *Fortnightly Review*, LXXV (1901), 951-958; Arnold White, "A Message from the Mediterranean," *National Review*, XXXVII (1901), 679-683. See also *Parliamentary Debates* (Series IV), XCVI, 1085.

⁹ White, pp. 271-272.

¹⁰ Archibald S. Hurd, *Naval Efficiency*, p. 72.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 192 ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁴ *Parliamentary Debates* (Series IV), XCVIII, 743-751.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, CIX, 1259-1260.

¹⁶ Lord Beresford, *Memoirs*, II, 466-469.

England's enemies could be numbered on every hand as the year opened.¹⁷ Morocco, where France was displaying dangerous symptoms of activity,¹⁸ and Manchuria, threatened by Russia,¹⁹ were the main danger points. During the year negotiations for an alliance with Germany and attempts to work with her in the Far East broke down.²⁰ True, towards the end of the year the prospect of an Anglo-Japanese alliance gave some hope for relief in the Far East,²¹ but Morocco and the Mediterranean remained.

It was at this juncture that the news that France and Italy had agreed with respect to Tripoli was published. Since Prinetti's accession to office he had wanted to nail France publicly to her bargain, and in June had broached the matter to the French government.²² His opportunity came when the French government in the course of a dispute with Turkey occupied Mytilene in November, 1901, at a moment when he was excited over reports of French aggressions on the Tripolitan border.²³ He failed to arouse his allies to support him in demanding explanations or compensation;²⁴ but Delcassé, thinking that England and Italy had already come to an agreement respecting Tripoli,²⁵ yielded to Prinetti's request for a publication of the agreement of 1900 to the extent of permitting Prinetti to declare that the Mytilene incident aroused no anxiety in Italy since France had given assurances that it would not pass the line of 1899 nor would it cut the caravan routes leading from Tripolitania into Central Africa.²⁶

¹⁷ Newton, ch. vi.

¹⁸ Monson to Salisbury, October 17, 1900, B. D., II, 259; Lansdowne to Durand, April 15, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 260; Monson to Lansdowne, June 14, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 260-261.

¹⁹ Lansdowne to MacDonald, April 17, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, chs. ix and x.

²¹ This alliance was signed on January 30, 1902.

²² Wedel to Bülow, January 11, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 745.

²³ Barrère to Delcassé, November 1, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 547-548.

²⁴ Wedel to Bülow, November 3, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 462-463; Bülow to Wedel, November 4, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 464-465; Wedel to Foreign Office, November 8, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 472-473.

²⁵ Delcassé to Barrère, November 29, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 642.

²⁶ Barrère to Delcassé, December 3, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 651.

Prinetti was not slow to take advantage of this opportunity and triumphantly made his announcement to the outside world on December 14, 1901.²⁷

Prinetti's statement differed from the one made by Visconti-Venosta one year previous only in being more explicit.²⁸ But the press in Austria, France and Italy made much of it,²⁹ and the Germans took advantage of the opening to call the British to account for the apparent desertion of Italy.³⁰ Signor Pansa, Italian ambassador at London, pointedly called attention to the Franco-Italian rapprochement as putting an end to the "feeling of annoyance which had been created in Italy by the conclusion of the Anglo-French Convention of 1899 concerning the hinterland of Tripoli."³¹ Prinetti took the position that a Franco-Italian discord was to the advantage of England,³² and assumed an aggrieved attitude towards England when talking with the British ambassador, Lord Currie.³³

Officially the British government put a good face on the matter. Lord Lansdowne, in the midst of taunting reminders from the German ambassador, Count Metternich, that England was isolated and that a refusal to accept the German alliance proffer might make Russia and Germany draw closer together, merely remarked that the Franco-Italian agreement was as much a move against the Triple Alliance as against England.³⁴ Lord Salisbury sarcastically said that Italy would have to wait a long time for the division of Turkey. After all England's strength lay, not in alliances, but in her fleet and chalk cliffs.³⁵

²⁷ A. P. C. D., DCXXIV, 6748-6749.

²⁸ Ibid.; Currie to Lansdowne, January 4, 1902, B. D., VIII, 21.

²⁹ Ibid.; Barrère to Delcassé, December 16, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 672; De Reverseaux to Delcassé, December 18, 1901, *ibid.*, pp. 672-673.

³⁰ Lansdowne to Lascelles, December 18, 1901, B. D., II, 82.

³¹ Lansdowne to Currie, December 17, 1901, *ibid.*, I, 284.

³² Barrère to Delcassé, December 31, 1901, D. D. F. (Series II), I, 692.

³³ Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., I, 285.

³⁴ Lansdowne to Lascelles, December 19, 1901, B. D., II, 82.

³⁵ Metternich to Foreign Office, December 21, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 727.

British opinion was not quite so nonchalant. All during 1901 there had been a current of uneasiness with respect to England's relations with Italy.³⁶ In April 1901 the *Times*—on the occasion of the Italian fleet's visit to Toulon—kept its courage up by asserting that an Anglo-Italian understanding was still a cornerstone of Italian policy and that Italy surely would not consent to making the Mediterranean a Latin or French lake.³⁷ In June the *Times* found it puzzling that Italy should be cool towards England when the British fleet guaranteed Italian independence, and Tripoli and Albania—two touchstones of Italian policy—involved no British interests.³⁸ In September the liberal F. A. White became so uneasy about the consequences of the Boer War that he advocated the surrender of Malta to its original owners and cessation of the claim that the Mediterranean was a British lake.³⁹ In November A. B. C., writing in the *National Review* concerning British foreign policy, were willing to suggest the cession of *Italia irredenta* to Italy as a means of conciliating her feelings, should the Austrian Empire break up.⁴⁰

This random uneasiness changed into real alarm at Prinetti's announcement that France and Italy were one in the Mediterranean, and at the discussion which followed. The *Times* admitted that France had gained by respecting what Italy thought England had given away, but warned that the Italians should remember the past and the value of English aid in the Mediterranean.⁴¹ The *Standard* pointed out that other powers than France and Italy were interested in Tripoli and that England had a special interest in Morocco.⁴² The *National Review* regretted that England's action had opened the door for a Franco-Italian rapprochement, and became

³⁶ In harmony with the general uneasiness of the year.

³⁷ The *Times*, April 10, 1901, p. 7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1901, p. 9. This was by way of comment on a letter from its Rome correspondent published in the issue of May 29.

³⁹ F. A. White, "Consequences of the War," *Westminster Review*, CLVI (1901), 272.

⁴⁰ A. B. C., "British Foreign Policy," *National Review*, XXXVIII (1901), 356.

⁴¹ The *Times*, December 18, 1901, p. 9.

⁴² Quoted in *La Tribuna*, January 8, 1902, p. 1.

convinced that Italy had exchanged the British policy of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean for an indefinite French policy.⁴³ An "Anglo-Italian" was of the opinion that the way was open for England and Italy to find themselves on opposing sides.⁴⁴ Sir Charles Dilke scented trouble off the coast of Morocco since Italy's naval bases had been lost along with her alliance.⁴⁵ Lord Beresford, navalist *à l'outrance*, wanted to be assured that the Franco-Italian agreement was not detrimental to English interests.⁴⁶

British official circles were likewise disturbed despite the bold face they had put on matters. Lord Lansdowne suspected that the agreement referred to Morocco.⁴⁷ If a source inspired by Lord Salisbury can be trusted as revealing his opinion at the time, he considered it as a sinister sign on the European horizon; and the Admiralty sent two cruisers to visit the coast of Tripoli in January 1902.⁴⁸

The first matter to which the British turned their attention was that of the Maltese language question.⁴⁹ This constituted more than a significant trifle. Italians considered any attack upon the Italian language a matter of first importance.⁵⁰ Both Prinetti and the king complained bitterly about the British policy in Malta, the former sarcastically remarking that it was remarkable that Chamberlain should have found time to abolish the Italian language in the only British dependency where it was used.⁵¹ Chamberlain, however, was at first stubborn when Currie reported the nature

⁴³ National Review, XXXVIII (1901), 658-659; *ibid.*, XXXIX (1902), 860.

⁴⁴ Anglo-Italian. "Italy and England," Fortnightly Review, LXXVII (1902), 247-259.

⁴⁵ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CVIII, 917, CX, 703-705.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 725-726.

⁴⁷ Lansdowne to Lascelles, December 19, 1901, B. D., II, 82; Lansdowne to Plunkett, January 7, 1902, *ibid.*, VIII, 22-23; Bülow to Metternich, December 21, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 725-726.

⁴⁸ Anon, "The Marquis of Salisbury," Quarterly Review, CXCVI (1902), 664; *Mémoires diplomatiques*, XL (1902), 67.

⁴⁹ See above, pp. 88-90.

⁵⁰ Barrère to Delcassé, February 10, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 83-84.

⁵¹ Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., I, 285; Currie to Lansdowne, January 6, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 286.

of the Italian grievance. He argued that since the Maltese did not speak Italian there could be no abolition. Besides, the fact that ninety per cent of the Maltese were electing English would soon make it a mere matter of convenience to have this as the official language.⁵²

Chamberlain was not able to maintain this position. The exact arguments which may have taken place in the cabinet have not been revealed. But it is certain that he remembered the scene at Lord Currie's in 1900.⁵³ The popularity of English as an optional subject was declining.⁵⁴ Irredentism was rising in Malta.⁵⁵ British Liberals and Irish Catholics found it strange that he should alienate England's last friend and violate the right of independent judgment.⁵⁶ In the *Contemporary Review* the cry was being raised that the Maltese agitation might lead to the cession of the island to Italy.⁵⁷ It is not hard to see why Chamberlain reached the conclusion that he must conciliate Italy. He proceeded to do this by saying that he withdrew the proclamation terminating the official use of Italian in order that he might not have any misunderstanding with Italy.⁵⁸

The announcement did not touch the question of the optional teaching of the Italian language in the schools, but it was greeted with enthusiasm. *La Tribuna* termed the day of Chamberlain's speech a beautiful one in Anglo-Italian friendship.⁵⁹ The *Giornale d'Italia* urged the Maltese to accept and felt reassured concerning the state of relations with England.⁶⁰ "Victor" in *Nuova antologia* exultantly proclaimed that Italy must feel a betterment of her position in

⁵² Ibid., footnote.

⁵³ Steed, I, 164.

⁵⁴ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CI, 1198.

⁵⁵ "La Dante Alighieri a Verona," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XCVI (1901), 11-12.

⁵⁶ Daily News, August 2, 1901, p. 4; Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), XCVIII, 1180, CI, 1170 ff., 1206.

⁵⁷ O. Eltzbacher, "Maltese Grievances," *Contemporary Review*, LXXX (1901), 247-248.

⁵⁸ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CI, 1204-1205.

⁵⁹ *La Tribuna*, January 30, 1902, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Quoted in the Times, January 31, 1902, p. 5.

the world.⁶¹ Only journals like the socialist *Avanti*, the Catholic *Osservatore romano* and the radical *Secolo* opposed dropping the Maltese cause on such a slight concession.⁶² By 1903, when Chamberlain abolished the Strickland constitution of 1887, the agitation had so died away that the complaints of the *Tribuna* and *Secolo* were formal in character.⁶³ The Italian government, of course, made no protest against this last measure.⁶⁴

During the time in which the British government decided to make this concession concerning Malta, negotiations with respect to the main issue—Tripoli—had been going on. Prinetti had probably made his speech in December with an eye to this matter and, as time showed that England would yield in Malta, became more determined that she should yield more.⁶⁵ In addition to feeling that Tripoli as the last bit of unassigned territory on the coasts of the Mediterranean should go to Italy, he said that the narrowing possibilities of emigration to Tunis and the Americas made desirable such a population outlet.⁶⁶ Apparently thinking that Italy was not strong enough to seize it by force he put forward the tentative idea that Italy should hold Tripoli much after the same fashion that England held Cyprus or Egypt.⁶⁷

Prinetti's method of approach to this question was admirably adapted to achieve the end that he had in view. It will be remembered that he had lost no time in bringing the Franco-Italian situation to the notice of the British government. The Germans, who feared that he might carry his government further in a French direction, assured him that they would make no difficulties for him at Constantinople

⁶¹ Victor, "Note e commenti," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), XCVII (1902), 562-563.

⁶² *The Times*, February 5, 1902, p. 5; *Il Secolo*, February 7, 1902, p. 1.

⁶³ *Il Secolo*, June 24, 1903; *La Tribuna*, July 3, 1903, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *Parliamentary Debates* (Series IV), CXXIV, 793.

⁶⁵ Barrère to Delcassé, February 10, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 83-84.

⁶⁶ Wedel to Bülow, December 27, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 732-735; Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., VIII, 20.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

after he had told them that he was sure that the British would not create difficulties.⁶⁸ Taking advantage of the universal concern in England, he complained bitterly to the British ambassador concerning the neglect of Italy by the British government, and of the unfriendly attitude of the British press.⁶⁹ And when Lord Currie sought an audience with Victor Emmanuel, Prinetti had schooled the young King so well that Currie sarcastically wrote home that this same neglect was "the burden of his song."⁷⁰ At the same time during the conversation in which he broached the matter of Tripoli and described the nature of the French promise respecting it, Prinetti was careful not to present a formal request for a concession with respect to Tripoli,⁷¹ so that he could tell the Germans with some truth that he had refused to take the initiative in seeking a concession of this nature from the British.⁷²

Lord Currie did not think the situation serious enough to communicate with the Foreign Office by telegraph,⁷³ but he assured Prinetti that England would make him no difficulties in his proposed arrangement with Turkey if other powers were willing. He pointed out that the main objection would probably come from the Sultan's fear of losing prestige among his subjects.⁷⁴ He seems, however, to have realized that the cards were in Prinetti's hands. Consequently while he was careful to emphasize the point that Prinetti had not changed matters from the condition in which the Marquis Visconti-Venosta had left them,⁷⁵ he argued to the home authorities

⁶⁸ Wedel to Bulow, December 27, 1901, G. P., XVIII, 732-735; Wedel to Bulow, January 10, 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 743-744; Bulow's memo., January 12, 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 746-747.

⁶⁹ Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., I, 285; Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., VIII, 20.

⁷⁰ Wedel to Bulow, January 5, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 738-739; Currie to Lansdowne, January 5, 1902, B. D., I, 286.

⁷¹ Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., VIII, 20.

⁷² Wedel to Bulow, January 5, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 738-739. The British assumed he was requesting a similar concession. See Lansdowne to Currie, March 7, 1902, B. D., I, 290.

⁷³ See dispatches B. D., VIII, 20-21, B. D., I, 285-286.

⁷⁴ Currie to Lansdowne, January 1, 1902, B. D., VIII, 20.

⁷⁵ Currie to Lansdowne, January 4, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 21.

that the motive of Lord Salisbury's refusal to make a pledge respecting Tripoli in 1899 had lost much of its force now that France had taken the lead in making the declaration then desired.⁷⁶ In general there seems no reason to doubt that Prinetti's statement to the German ambassador, to the effect that Lord Currie was favorable towards British concessions respecting Tripoli, reflects most of the truth.⁷⁷

Lord Lansdowne responded to the Italians in a dignified manner. He was not in Rome or Paris where the press was much excited over the advances Delcassé and Barrère were making to Italy.⁷⁸ Discounting the possibility of a working agreement between France and Italy, Sir Edward Monson reported from Paris that Delcassé was friendly towards England and that Italy's motive in making a parade of the understanding with France was that of securing a better position in the Triple Alliance.⁷⁹ Accordingly Lord Lansdowne could see nothing to get excited about, although he admitted that Italy might have made some concessions to France in Morocco. The agreement of 1899 applied only to a small portion of Tripoli. Consequently the French declaration to which Prinetti had referred could not affect the region in question to a very great extent.⁸⁰ It is comprehensible why, at the beginning, he saw no reason to change Lord Salisbury's non-committal policy of 1899.⁸¹

Such in fact was the first reply which he made to Prinetti. The latter, on January 13, 1902, proposed that the British government should pledge itself to observe the line laid down in the Convention of 1899 particularly respecting Tripoli.⁸² Lord Lansdowne in reply took the position that Lord Salisbury had assumed in 1899; namely, that the 1899 declaration

⁷⁶ Currie to Lansdowne, January 2, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷⁷ Wedel to Bülow, January 5, 1902, G. F., XVIII, 738-739.

⁷⁸ By means of interviews quoted in the Times of January 2 and 4, 1902.

⁷⁹ Monson to Lansdowne, January 5, 1902, B. D., VIII, 22; Monson to Lansdowne, January 10, 1902, B. D., I, 286-287.

⁸⁰ Lansdowne to Plunkett, January 7, 1902, B. D., VIII, 22-23.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Lansdowne to Currie, February 3, 1902, B. D., I, 288.

in no way affected Tripoli or the rights of third powers in its hinterland.⁸³

Naturally this statement did not satisfy Prinetti. It left Tripoli open to the expansion of Great Britain. Nor did it suit the tone of the Italian public, the keynote of which was struck by the *Nuova antologia*. This old Italian review argued that England was isolated and her recent policy was not encouraging. Her people were ignorant of Italy, but were paying more attention to her as a result of the Franco-Italian agreement. Certainly England could not nourish objections to Italy's expansion in a region where she had no aspirations.⁸⁴ Backed by such opinions as these Prinetti's next move was to request that the British government should remain forever disinterested in Tripoli. He hinted that other powers had not only given him this assurance but that they had also given *carte blanche* as to the time.⁸⁵

Lansdowne was not slow in pointing out that such an engagement on the part of England would be contrary to its treaty engagements with Turkey and the policy of the *status quo*.⁸⁶ But this was a smoke screen. From an inspection of the discussions which took place it is clear that he saw that some concessions were necessary. If the other powers had made such concessions as Prinetti had stated and Lansdowne's own government did not, it would be hard to hold the friendship of Italy. Under the then existing circumstances of British isolation, mitigated hardly at all by the Anglo-Japanese alliance and the Hay-Pauncefote treaty with the United States,⁸⁷ it is not hard to see such a decision in his mind when he informed Prinetti that his government was anxious to afford evidence of its friendship and of present intentions

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁸⁴ *Nuova antologia* (Series IV) XCVII (1902), 176-177. See also *Popolo romano* quoted in *Mémorial diplomatique*, XXXIX (1901), 810; *Perseveranza* quoted in *L'esercito italiano*, January 5, 1902, p. 1; *G. Ferrero* in *Il Secolo*, January 11, 1902, p. 1.

⁸⁵ Lansdowne to Currie, February 3, 1902, B. D., I, 289.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ The Anglo-Japanese Alliance involved England very heavily in the Far Eastern ambitions of Japan. The Hay-Pauncefote treaty gave up Britain's interests in Central America, and did not prevent trouble in the Alaska boundary controversy.

respecting Tripoli. Consequently he was willing to say that Great Britain had no designs on Tripoli and that it desired the *status quo* there. But if alteration of this *status quo* should become inevitable, the object of his government would be "that such alteration should not be of a nature to operate to the detriment of Italian interests."⁸⁸

Apparently this communication was accompanied by much emphasis on the interest of Great Britain in maintaining its international engagements to Turkey, for Prinetti remarked to the German ambassador at Rome that he had asked for the dropping of this phrase from the British proposal.⁸⁹ Lansdowne then sought to pry into the Franco-Italian agreement on the ground that Prinetti was basing his argument on the French model throughout. But the latter wisely kept its exact nature a mystery. Consequently Lansdowne, after some grumbling about the reserve of the Italian government and the geographic terms of the French declaration, gave in. Currie was instructed to repeat that the agreement of 1899 in no way affected the rights of third powers in Tripoli and Benghazi and the line drawn thereby restricted France and Great Britain to the east and west respectively. With this monotonous preface out of the way, Currie was authorized also to give assurance that:

... His Britannic Majesty's Government have no aggressive or ambitious designs in regard to Tripoli as above described; that they continue to be sincerely desirous of the maintenance of the *status quo* there, as in other parts of the coast of the Mediterranean; and that if at any time an alteration of the *status quo* should take place, it would be their object that, so far as is compatible with the obligations resulting from the Treaties which at present form part of the public law of Europe, such alteration should be in conformity with Italian interests. This assurance is given on the understanding and in full confidence that Italy on her part has not entered, and will not enter, into arrangements with other Powers in regard to this or other portions of the Mediterranean of a nature inimical to British interests.⁹⁰

The note embodying these points was duly transmitted to Prinetti who, in Currie's words, "expressed his cordial thanks

⁸⁸ Currie to Lansdowne, February 3, 1902, B. D., I, 289.

⁸⁹ Wedel to Bülow, February 15, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 749.

⁹⁰ Lansdowne to Currie, March 7, 1902, B. D., I, 290-291.

for the good will shown by His Majesty's Government" and assured Currie that Italy had entered into no engagement with France regarding England. He also showed him confidentially the French declaration of December 14, 1900.⁹¹ Prinetti lost no time in announcing to the Italian chamber that the relations of France and Italy had in no way disturbed the relations of traditional friendship between England and Italy,⁹² and Count Nigra at Vienna expressed his satisfaction at the British step.⁹³ But when Prinetti revealed to Barrère that he had also given Currie an assurance that Italy's arrangements with France concerning Morocco were confined to disinterestedness, the ever hopeful Barrère thought that Prinetti's reserve indicated an incomplete and conditional British promise respecting Tripolitania.⁹⁴

From the Italian point of view, to be sure, the British declaration could have been much fuller. At the same time no British government would be likely to disavow, save under exceptional circumstances, the pledge of non-aggression in Tripoli, and it was made extremely hard for them to oppose Italian action in Tripoli provided the Italians acted with the discretion to which most of their statesmen were accustomed.

The British also gained some advantages. British reservations and ambiguities in the declaration of March 1902 could and were probably intended to act as a brake on possible Italian precipitancy. At a time when they had not yet decided to come to terms with France over Morocco,⁹⁵ concessions by the British conditioned upon the pacific character of Franco-Italian understandings towards England headed off danger regarding Morocco. Thus Delcassé was compelled to look to England for consent respecting Morocco more than ever; and its government could wait till the spring of 1903 before taking up the matter seriously.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Currie to Lansdowne, March 12, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 291.

⁹² D. D. F. (Series II), II, 186.

⁹³ Plunkett to Lansdowne, April 10, 1902, B. D., I, 291.

⁹⁴ Barrère to Delcassé, March 21, 1902. D. D. F. (Series II), II, 185.

⁹⁵ Lansdowne to Monson, August 6, 1902, B. D., II, 265-266.

⁹⁶ Anderson, ch. vi; *ibid.*, p. 86 especially.

Such was the end of these negotiations over Tripoli. But public interest had been aroused in both countries to such an extent that parliaments and press continued to reveal cross currents of opinion which illustrate the state of relations between England and Italy in 1902.

The source of this agitation was Italian and Turkish. The government of the latter country was fearful that the Franco-Italian agreements foreshadowed the surrender of Tripoli to Italy.⁹⁷ Italian opposition journals pressed the theme that Prinetti was leading Italy into adventures such as an expedition to Tripoli would be.⁹⁸

Naturally Prinetti denied that he had any such intentions.⁹⁹ Still many Englishmen were curious. On April 21, 1902 O'Kelley asked the British ministry if France and Italy had not made an agreement giving Italy the right to annex Tripoli at the first convenient moment, if Prinetti had not announced that an expedition against Tripoli was being prepared, if it was not the policy of Great Britain to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and would orders be issued to prevent Tripoli's occupation by any other power. Viscount Cranborne replied that the government was not aware of such an agreement and that Prinetti had made no such announcement. As for the British government its policy was that of the *status quo* as Prinetti's speech also showed his to be.¹⁰⁰

Technically, of course, this statement was correct. The British government as we now know was not fully aware of the Italian side of the agreement by which Italy disinterested herself in Morocco, nor did the French declaration regarding

⁹⁷ Constans to Delcassé, January 28, 1902 D. D. F. (Series II), II, 57-58.

⁹⁸ Barrère to Delcassé, April 9, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 230; Nuova antologia (Series IV), XCVIII (1902), 575; L'esercito italiano, March 28, 1902, p. 1; Mémorial diplomatique, XL (1902), 211, 235; C. Lombroso, "Il pericolo tripolitano," Nuova antologia (Series IV), XCVIII (1902), 720-725; Il Secolo, March 28, 1902, p. 1; Rassegna nazionale, CXXIV (1902), 752-753.

⁹⁹ A. P. C. D., DCLI, 543-544. Barrère believed he was sincere. Barrère to Delcassé, April 9, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 230.

¹⁰⁰ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CVI, 807.

Tripoli grant that country to Italy save by implication. But of course the British government knew that the agreement between France and Italy could have no other object than that of acquisition of Tripoli by the latter. Consequently Cranborne's statement came dangerously near to being incorrect in letter, and was more nearly so in spirit. Once involved in such a tangle the British government probably decided to bluff it out. On May 5, 1902 in reply to questions from the same questioner, Cranborne denied that any negotiations regarding the eventual occupation of the territory of Tripoli had taken place between the British government and Italy, and that the former had not given the latter "conditional assent to its occupation."¹⁰¹

Almost at once Prinetti was bombarded with questions by men who did not like this attitude of the British government. On May 21, 1902 the expansionist De Marinis of Salerno accused England of not seconding Italian aims in the Mediterranean.¹⁰² On the next day De Martino, and three days later, Guicciardini expressed the hope that England had given assurances similar to those of France.¹⁰³ The British government had stated in its note of March 12, 1902 that it would not object to a general parliamentary announcement of the terms of the agreement arrived at.¹⁰⁴ Consequently Prinetti had his opportunity in these questions and announced that England had made similar assurances to those of France.¹⁰⁵

Naturally these utterances left the British government suspended in the air. Uneasiness concerning the friendship with Italy persisted, which Viscount Cranborne sought to allay in the House of Commons by saying that assurances had been given Italy that in Tripoli subject to "treaty obligations, we have every disposition to study Italian interests."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, CVII, 616-617.

¹⁰² A. P. C. D., DCLIII, 1931-1934.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1963-1964, 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Lansdowne to Currie, March 7, 1902, B. D., I, 291.

¹⁰⁵ A. P. C. D., DCLIII, 2036.

¹⁰⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CX, 725-734, 734 in particular.

The *Times* did not consider his explanations satisfactory,¹⁰⁷ nor did Earl Spencer apparently, for he asked Lord Lansdowne to allay the suspicions which had arisen.¹⁰⁸ Lord Lansdowne in an elaborate speech argued that all the outstanding questions with Italy had been settled, and that while the British government wished the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, they also hoped that if it should be disturbed "we shall find ourselves acting in cooperation with Italy." If Italy had done the natural thing and come to be friendly with France and strengthened her position thereby, the English would be the last to complain. And he closed by saying that there was no country that they wished to be or were on more friendly terms with than Italy.¹⁰⁹

These well phrased statements were certainly meant to appeal to friendly elements in Italy and flatter the self-esteem of Italians, although they did leave gaps for a political barrage. This was not slow in coming from all sides. The *Standard* believed that Lansdowne was optimistic, the *Post* that he had confessed that Italy was not an advocate of the *status quo*.¹¹⁰ The *Daily News* thought that Lansdowne's speech was anti-Tripoli in character and that since Italy's relations with two alliances of Europe were good and the one of which she was a member did not object to her occupation of Tripoli, it was useless to say that relations were on the old basis.¹¹¹ The *Times* considered his remarks most opportune,¹¹² while the *Chronicle* asserted that Anglo-Italian friendship was almost an axiom.¹¹³

The Italian press sought similarly to use his remarks for party purposes. The Zanardellian *Patria* wanted to know if England had an engagement to protect the integrity of the Ottoman Empire after she had provided for Egypt, Cyprus and the hinterland of Tripoli. Whatever England's engage-

The *Times*, July 4, 1902, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CXI, 650.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 660-663.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in *Il Secolo*, July 20, 1902, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Daily News*, July 19, 1902, p. 6.

¹¹¹ The *Times*, July 19, 1902, pp. 11-12.

¹¹² Quoted in *Il Secolo*, July 20, 1902, p. 1.

ments were, Tripoli was Italy's sphere.¹¹⁴ *L'Italie* called attention to the common interests of Italy and England and remarked that Lansdowne's speech had made for friendship.¹¹⁵ *La Perseveranza* thought England had atoned for her lapses and that now Italy could go to Tripoli with European consent.¹¹⁶ The official *Tribuna* found that despite Lansdowne's adherence to the *status quo* his friendship towards Italy so filled his speech that only the hypothesis of support for Italian interests could be admitted, and closed by saying:

Yesterday in the House of Lords was a good day for England and for us. And it is our duty to join to our protestations of friendship given in return, the expression of our keen satisfaction towards those who direct the foreign policy of Italy. Thanks to the skillfulness of a policy equally respectful of the interests of all, the prestige of our state has so grown that it can be said that if it must seek friendships and appreciate them, its own friendship is no less sought for and appreciated. The Marquis of Lansdowne, powerful minister of a most powerful state, has made the most solemn testimonial of this.¹¹⁷

With this cry of triumph Anglo-Italian friendship may be said to have attained a new basis. No longer did Italians feel that they must do as England did and in this spirit they carried on.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Daily News, July 21, 1902.

¹¹⁵ *L'Italie*, July 20, 1902, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in *L'esercito italiano*, July 23, 1902, p. 1.

¹¹⁷ *La Tribuna*, July 20, 1902, p. 1.

CHAPTER X

Do ut des IN AFRICA

Relations between Italy and England during the three years which followed the reconciliation of 1902 were inspired generally by the spirit of the *Tribuna's* utterance. This was particularly true in their dealings concerning Northeast Africa where the future of Abyssinia, Eritrea and Somaliland was involved. A minor illustration is also to be found in the problem raised by Belgian atrocities in the Congo.

It will be remembered that both England and Italy were interested in this region as signatories of the General Act of the Conference of Berlin. England's greater missionary and trade commitments, however, gave her the initiative when Belgium acted as if the region were her colony for trade purposes and permitted bad treatment of the natives.¹ In August 1903 as a result of complaints of the Aborigines Protection Society, the London Chamber of Commerce, various church bodies and the British parliament,² the British government addressed a circular dispatch to the signatory powers in which it was suggested that they should make representations on the subject of bad treatment of the natives and agree to refer the question of Belgian trade policy to the Hague Tribunal.³

The response demonstrated the futility of relying upon international engagements to enforce humanitarian measures in Africa. Questions in the British parliament showed that no satisfactory replies were received by the government.⁴ In fact Turkey was the only European power to reply emphatically.⁵ Italy contented herself with assuming a sympathetic yet reserved attitude which in no way committed her.⁶

¹ Arthur B. Keith, *The Belgian Congo and the Berlin Act*, chs. iv, v, pp. 127-128 esp.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 128-131; H. R. Fox-Bourne, *Civilization in Congoland*, pp. 298-302; *Parliamentary Debates (Series IV)*, CXXXII, 1289, 1331.

³ *Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 14, 1903*, pp. 1-3.

⁴ *Parliamentary Debates (Series IV)*, CXXX, 230; CXXXIV, 1016-1017.

⁵ Keith, p. 131; Ward and Gooch, III, 389.

⁶ Keith, p. 131.

Italian interests in the Congo and Italian public opinion furnish an adequate explanation of this reserve. In 1903 many Italians and Italian army officers were in the employ of the Congo State,⁷ and the region was under investigation as an outlet for emigration.⁸ Professor Gianturco, a friend of Giolitti, viewed the British *démarche* as one inspired by commercial greed.⁹ Colonial groups accused England of seeking to grab the Congo after Leopold had made it profitable.¹⁰ Catholic circles joined with Belgians in thinking that the Protestant missionaries in the Congo were at the root of the excitement over atrocities.¹¹ Italian army opinion resented charges of this nature as reflections upon the army officers stationed there.¹² Even the *Giornale d'Italia* hinted that the Congo was needed to round out the possessions of France, Germany and England.¹³

In the two years which followed the British note of 1903 the Italian interest died away. Captain Baccari, the official investigator of Congo emigration possibilities, reported that the territory was unfit for this purpose.¹⁴ Probably his report was colored by the fact that he was the object of an attempted assassination while there. but at any rate in January 1905 the Italian ministry ordered that no more Italian officers would be permitted to enlist for Congo service.¹⁵ As late as

⁷ *Giornale d'Italia*, June 13, 1905, p. 2; *Emigrazione e colonie*, II, 493.

⁸ Salvatore Gianno, "Lo stato indipendente del Congo," *L'Italia coloniale*, V (1901), 3-4; *Bollettino del ministero degli affari esteri*, 1899, pp. 311-315.

⁹ Emile Gianturco, "Il Congo e l'Inghilterra secondo la convenzione internazionale di Berlino," *Nuova antologia* (Series IV), CXV (1905), 93-109.

¹⁰ Duca d'Isola, "Il movimento della politica inglese contro lo stato indipendente del Congo," *L'Italia coloniale*, III (1903), 959-960; *Giornale d'Italia*, June 9, 1905, p. 3.

¹¹ *La Civiltà cattolica*, August 6, 1904, p. 305; *ibid.*, December 5, 1903, pp. 624-625.

¹² *L'esercito italiano*, February 18, 1904, p. 1.

¹³ *Giornale d'Italia*, May 30, 1903, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Bollettino dell'emigrazione*, No. 5, 1905.

¹⁵ *La Tribuna*, January 27, 1905, p. 1; see also the *Times*, November 19, 1905, p. 5.

March no official communication of this decision had been made to the British.¹⁶ Thus the reserved attitude was maintained.

A more vital problem was involved in the undefined hinterland of Italian Somaliland.¹⁷ Here Great Britain, who in the words of Abdul Hamid shared with Turkey the honor of being the world's greatest Mohammedan power,¹⁸ was faced with the task of controlling the activities of Mohammed Ben Abdullah, commonly known as "The Mullah" or "the Mad Mullah." After having acquired the reputation of a holy man by reason of several pilgrimages to Mecca, in 1899 and 1900 he gathered such a following that he threatened the peace of British Somaliland.¹⁹ In 1901 the Ogaden tribes in the hinterland of Kismayu murdered a British agent.²⁰ In a region where Italian cooperation was desirable, Great Britain was faced with another of those frontier wars which have been endemic in her colonial history.

In the beginning of these troubles Italian cooperation was taken for granted. Lord Lansdowne assured the Italians that any crossing of their frontier by British expeditions would be temporary and argued that any pacification of the hinterland was beneficial to both.²¹ Visconti-Venosta, acting to fulfill Italy's obligations concerning the stoppage of the arms trade,²² sent the Pestalozza mission in order that the Mullah's supply of arms might be cut off.²³ But when the Mullah fled into the Italian protectorate in July 1901 Lord Lansdowne forebore to authorize pursuit thither,²⁴ probably

¹⁶ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CXLIII, 1189.

¹⁷ Rossetti, pp. 404-405; Hertslet (1909), II, 445 ff.

¹⁸ Bacon, I, 146.

¹⁹ Great Britain, War Office Official History of British Operations in Somaliland, 1901-1904, ch. ii; Douglas J. Jardine, *The Mad Mullah of Somaliland*.

²⁰ Ternan to Lansdowne, November 25, 1900, Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 3, 1901, p. 1.

²¹ Lansdowne to Currie, December 3, 1900, *ibid.*, Africa No. 5, 1901, pp. 70-71.

²² Under the Brussels Act of 1890.

²³ A. P. C. D., DCXXII, 5163.

²⁴ Lansdowne to Sadler, June 25, 1901, Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 3, 1902, p. 2.

because Anglo-Italian relations, as will be remembered, were cool at that time.

During 1901, however, reliance upon Abyssinian assistance produced no results.²⁵ Consequently in the spring of 1902 at the request of the British and coincidently with the restoration of more friendly feelings between England and Italy, a joint cruise of the Mijjertein coast was inaugurated; and an Italian officer accompanied the British expedition of that year, despite the Italian complaint that the extent of the arms trade was exaggerated, and a warning that the British should not push the Mullah too close to the Benadir.²⁶

Such action but touched the surface of the problem involved in capturing the Mullah who dodged from one water hole to another with amazing celerity. The natives in the Italian protectorate not only did not capture him, but were suspected of supplying him with arms and recruits.²⁷ Consequently in August 1902 Lansdowne suggested that a few hundred men should be landed at Illig in the Mullah's rear and that a rigid blockade of the coast should be set up.²⁸ The Italians preferred to rely upon information from the French concerning the departure of arms cargoes from Jibuti and feared such drastic measures would threaten the Benadir.²⁹ Lansdowne followed the Italian suggestion and requested that Paris supply this information.³⁰ In September, Colonel Swayne requested that either England or Italy land 600 men at Obbia since the Mullah had taken refuge in Italian territory.³¹ Lansdowne returned to his August proposal and sug-

²⁵ Sadler to Lansdowne, November 18, 1901, Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 3, 1902, pp. 21-23; Swayne to Sadler, November 10, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁶ Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 1, 1903, pp. 1-39.

²⁷ Dispatches relating to Military Operations in Somaliland, Cd. 2254, pp. 5-6.

²⁸ Lansdowne to Pansa, August 9, 1902, Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 1, 1903, p. 48; Lansdowne to Pansa, August 13, 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

²⁹ Lansdowne to Monson, August 13, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 53; memo., Carignani, *ibid.*, p. 57.

³⁰ Lansdowne to Rodd, September 19, 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

³¹ Cadeaux to Lansdowne, September 19, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 61.

gested that after an inspection of the coast he would be willing to hold a conference as the Italians had requested at that time.³² His suggestion was followed but Pansa in replying emphasized the point that this in no way committed his government to an expedition against the Mullah.³³

At this juncture a miniature press war broke out in Italy over the question of cooperation with the British. The radical *Secolo* took the position that only England and the private company leasing the Benadir would benefit from cooperation.³⁴ The *Esplorazione commerciale* wanted something tangible for services Italy might render.³⁵ The ministerial *Patria* reminded the Italians that England had consulted her own interests in the Zeila affair of 1896. They should think twice before arousing the Mullah and should ask compensation for even moral cooperation.³⁶ Military circles favored action only in the circumstance of an attack by the Mullah upon Italian interests, but were willing to permit the British to act alone.³⁷ *Perseveranza* urged full compliance with British wishes and pointed vaguely to the great opportunity which would thus be created.³⁸

Such differences of opinion were inexplicable to many in England. The *Morning Post* pointed out that Italy was under a legal obligation to guard the Somaliland coast against its use by the Mullah as a base.³⁹ The *Daily Graphic* argued that the Mullah was dangerous to both countries and that Italy became responsible if she permitted her territory to be the center for hostile operations.⁴⁰ These criticisms drew the retort from the *Tribuna* that Italy was not an accomplice of the Mullah and that she would answer any British request

³² Lansdowne's memo., October 10, 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

³³ Pansa to Lansdowne, October 30, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 76.

³⁴ *Il Secolo*, October 22, 1902, p. 1.

³⁵ *Esplorazione commerciale*, XVII (1902), 335.

³⁶ Quoted in the *Times*, November 6, 1902, p. 3.

³⁷ *Secolo XIX* of Genova quoted in the *Daily News*, October 25, 1902, p. 7.

³⁸ Quoted in *L'esercito italiano*, October 24, 1902, p. 1.

³⁹ Quoted in the *Tribuna*, November 11, 1902, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, November 14, 1902, p. 1.

all the more quickly because England had waited so long about Zeila in 1896.⁴¹

Prinetti could not well afford to follow all of this advice which came to him from all directions. He needed the co-operation of the British in suppressing the slave trade in which employees of the private company exploiting the Benadir had become involved.⁴² He wanted to be admitted to the blockade that England and Germany were inaugurating against Venezuela.⁴³ Naturally he did not wish to see operations on the part of the English which would drive the Mullah into the Benadir.⁴⁴ With Italian colonial interests seeking to exploit the region about Lugh,⁴⁵ he could not well be deaf to the cry the colonialists were raising for compensation in return for cooperation. Consequently his course was set towards the goal of minimum cooperation and maximum compensation.

The British seem to have felt that something must be done to restore their prestige in Northeast Africa.⁴⁶ They preferred active Italian participation in action against the Mullah.⁴⁷ But their conduct soon showed they did not want to wait for this to develop.

As a result of negotiations at Rome in December 1903 it was agreed that Obbia could be used as a base for British operations, provided that every effort was made to keep the Mullah from the Benadir.⁴⁸ British response to the Italian desire for compensation can be seen in the agreement entered into soon after by which they would consult the Italians before deviating from the 1891 line in laying down a boundary

⁴¹ *La Tribuna*, November 11 and 14, 1902, p. 1.

⁴² Dulio to Prinetti, September 23, 1902, D. D., No. 102, pp. 60-61, also see pp. 14-21; Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate*, p. 250.

⁴³ Rodd (Series III), p. 23.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴⁵ Mondaini, part 1, pp. 195-196; *La Tribuna*, September 23, 1903, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁶ Rodd (Series III), p. 22.

⁴⁷ Lansdowne to Rodd, December 6, 1902, *Parliamentary Papers, Africa No. 1*, 1903, pp. 87-88.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-91.

line between Abyssinia and British East Africa,⁴⁹ and a decision that they would aid in improving the Italian position in the Benadir.⁵⁰ Anglo-Italian relations resumed the familiar rôle of cooperation in Africa.⁵¹

The path of cooperation was not without its thorns. Early in 1903 the Sultan of Obbia, whose territory had been chosen as a base of operations against the Mullah, exhibited a good deal of cupidity and demanded rather high prices for supplies.⁵² After a conference with the Italian representative, Count Lovatelli, he was deported.⁵³ Such summary treatment aroused two differently motivated fears: the fear of injury to Italian colonial interests, from the stockholders of the company leasing the Benadir; and the fear of provoking a colonial war, from the *Gazzetta del Torino* and the *Secolo*.⁵⁴ At the same time rumors that the Mullah was going south into the Italian protectorate led the *Corriere della Sera* to accuse the Italian military authorities of negligence and the British of bad faith.⁵⁵

These complaints were accompanied by others which opened an old sore in colonial matters. Senator Vigoni, editor of the *Esplorazione commerciale*, who was discontented with the Sudan-Eritrean boundary agreement of 1902, charged that the most elementary knowledge of the situation in Somaliland should have told Prinetti that the British force could not keep the Mullah from the Benadir.⁵⁶ In parliament he argued that an agreement for the loss of the Tomat salient should have been compensated for by concessions on the Juba.⁵⁷ And

⁴⁹ Trattati, ecc., II, 1112-1113.

⁵⁰ Memo., Admiral Morin, August 29, 1903, B. D., I, 318.

⁵¹ See ch. iv.

⁵² Dispatches relating to Military Operations in Somaliland, Cd. 2254, pp. 18-19.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Il Secolo, February 6, 1903, p. 1; Giornale d'Italia, January 19, 1903, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Quoted in the Times, February 9, 1903, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Esplorazione commerciale, XVIII (1903), 36-37; A. P. Senato, DCXLIX, 1895-1898, 1900-1901.

⁵⁷ Ibid. He meant that the loss of all prospects of trade with the Sudan should have some compensation. For the negotiations of 1901-1902, see above, pp. 102-105.

in his organ appeared a demand for the freeing of the Benadir ports from the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar.⁵⁸

Italian colonial officials shared some of Vigoni's dissatisfaction with the agreement of 1902.⁵⁹ They had reaped but little commercial reward from the territory south of the Setit which they had exchanged for Tomat, and the prospect that Sudanese railways to Kassala would drain much of this away was not inviting.⁶⁰ Uneasy about the prospects of civil war in Abyssinia and possible European intervention which might follow the death of Emperor Menelik they had approached Colonel Harrington as early as December 1902 on the matter of joint action in case of such an eventual *dénouement*.⁶¹ To these considerations the weakness of the Zanardelli ministry added another.⁶² A far-reaching colonial agreement with England might go far to save it. Such an agreement must have been in Admiral Morin's mind when he took the matter up in September 1903.

He was probably encouraged by the concessions which England had made in the preceding fall and winter, but he used the question of the Abyssinian railway as his approach. In 1894-1897 a French company had been granted a monopoly of railway construction from Jibuti to the Nile. The promoters got into financial difficulties. Control passed into the hands of British capitalists, and again with the aid of the French government into the hands of the French; and under these circumstances the line was completed almost to Harrar.⁶³ In 1901 British imperialists proposed a connection from Berbera or Zeila to Harrar.⁶⁴ The Italians co-operated with the British against the French monopoly and

⁵⁸ *Esplorazione commerciale*, XVIII (1903), 116.

⁵⁹ See note 57.

⁶⁰ Rodd to Lansdowne, September 6, 1903, B. D., I, 315-317.

⁶¹ B. D., VIII, 24.

⁶² Prinetti had suffered a stroke of paralysis in January 1903. Giolitti had retired for reasons best known to himself in June 1903. The ministry thus was left with no outstanding figures.

⁶³ Rossetti, pp. 135 ff.; British and Foreign State Papers, XCV, 840-847.

⁶⁴ E. Dicey, "The Abyssinian Question," *Empire Review*, I, (1901), 298-304.

used this support as a ground for opening the entire set of questions at stake in Africa. They proposed that the British and Italian governments should act together to maintain their agreements with Abyssinia and in case the *status quo* should change. The Italians wanted to be assured of a connection at Kassala between proposed Sudanese and Eritrean lines of railway and of support for Italian commerce with Abyssinia and the Sudan. Re-echoing Vigoni, Morin also sought inclusion of Lugh and the Dau-Ganale region in Somaliland and concessions on the Juba.⁶⁵

Rodd, to whom these suggestions were addressed, argued that the railway connection was too far in the future for consideration. Commerce with the Sudan had been arranged in 1901, and Great Britain had treaties giving her favored nation treatment in Abyssinia which would preclude encouragement by her of Italian commerce there.⁶⁶ He was, however, willing to recommend favorable consideration of the other matters Admiral Morin had brought forward. In December 1903 an agreement along these lines was reached and recommended to the government at London.⁶⁷

Before this recommendation could be acted upon fireworks developed in connection with the Somaliland campaign. In November 1903 the British and Italian fleets conducted a joint demonstration against Obbia.⁶⁸ In December, after the natives of Durbo had killed the Italian Lieutenant Grabau, a crew from the British *Mohawk* burned the village.⁶⁹ In January 1904 an unauthorized Italian bombardment of the home of the Sultan of Warsangli so imbued the Italian government with fear of a native revolt that they withdrew consent for the British to cross the border.⁷⁰ At a fleet demonstration in April off Illig the Italians were conspicuously absent.⁷¹ Rumors appeared that the Mullah had fifteen thousand men ready to sack the entire Italian coast.⁷²

⁶⁵ Memo., August 29, 1903, B. D., I, 317-319.

⁶⁶ Rodd to Lansdowne, September 6, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 315-317.

⁶⁷ B. D., VIII, 24; Rodd (Series III), p. 75.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁶⁸ Official History, p. 229. ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 276-277. ⁷¹ *Idem.*

⁷² *Giornale d'Italia*, November 8, 1903, p. 3, March 13, 1904, p. 3.

Parliamentary and press pyrotechnics punctuated these events. The nationalist Morando connected the affair at Durbo with that at Obbia and accused the ministry of failing to uphold Italian prestige.⁷³ The Anglophile Vitelleschi did not like Italian timidity in face of what promised to be a holy war.⁷⁴ The *Corriere della Sera* gave prominence to charges that Italian submissiveness was promoting the British game of joining Berbera with East Africa.⁷⁵ The deputy Chiesi doubted if England would aid Italy should she be similarly embarrassed.⁷⁶

At this juncture the British government decided to stop the profitless pastime of chasing the Mullah from one water-hole to another. Besides, the Italians had made active co-operation of the natives one of the conditions of further acquiescence on their part.⁷⁷ The British decision left Tittoni who had become foreign minister in November 1903 with a possible colonial war on his hands and coincided with a British tendency to go in step with France respecting Abyssinia.⁷⁸

Fortunately the Mullah was in a mood for peace and had made proposals looking to Italian mediation between him and the British.⁷⁹ On April 21, 1904 Tittoni informed Lord Lansdowne that Italy would not fight the Mullah.⁸⁰ Ambassador Pansa reminded Lansdowne in making this communication that the Italians had never been enthusiastic about co-operation in Somaliland, to which the latter replied that the defensive policy England was going to adopt would put the burden on the Italians just as he had prophesied two years before.⁸¹ He raised no objections to the proposed action of

⁷³ A. P. C. D., DCLX, 9440-9441.

⁷⁴ A. P. Senato, DCLXXI, 3104-3105.

⁷⁵ Quoted in *Corriere mercantile*, March 12, 1904, p. 1.

⁷⁶ A. P. C. D., DCLXXII, 11,616-11,617.

⁷⁷ Parliamentary Debates (Series IV), CXXIV, 1162; Egerton to Lansdowne, April 12, 1904, Dispatches relating to Military Operations in Somaliland, Cd. 2254, p. 48; the Times, April 19, 1904, p. 5.

⁷⁸ B. D., VIII, 24.

⁷⁹ Tittoni to Pansa, April 21, 1904, D. D., No. 103, pp. 18-19.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Pansa to Tittoni, April 28, 1904, D. D., No. 103, pp. 19-20.

came necessary, on account of French claims to the portion of Abyssinia which England did not desire, to drop all references to spheres of influence.¹⁰¹ But there still existed Anglo-Italian unity against a French railway monopoly.¹⁰² Consequently negotiations dragged on through 1904 and 1905.

During this period Italian ambitions turned more and more to Abyssinia. The government continued to insist upon the connection of Eritrea and Somaliland.¹⁰³ The colonialist *Esplorazione commerciale* naïvely suggested that France and England should withdraw from Abyssinia. England, it believed, could be bribed to eliminate France by offering her support in the Yemen.¹⁰⁴ De Martino and the Italian colonial congress at Asmara urged better railroad and highway connections with Lake Tsana, Adowa and Gondar.¹⁰⁵

By December 1905 the French and British found that they could agree on a definition of their interests in Abyssinia, the construction of the railroad under French auspices to Addis Abeba, and reservation of a British railway monopoly west of this place. The railway clauses, however, were subject to the condition that equal treatment should be accorded to England and Italy at Jibuti, and over its rails, and were further conditioned on the approval of Menelik and the Italian government.¹⁰⁶ The Italian government objected to the vagueness of the clause defining their interest in territorial communication.¹⁰⁷ Governor Martini traveled through Northern Abyssinia to investigate possible railways and to promote commercial relations.¹⁰⁸ The French became impatient and suggested an accord *a deux* in order to head off the Germans.¹⁰⁹ Tittoni, however, came to the conclusion that it was useless to oppose France and England. Conse-

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Daily News, May 19, 1905, p. 7.

¹⁰³ B. D., VIII, 25.

¹⁰⁴ Op. cit., XX, 25-26.

¹⁰⁵ A. P. Senato, DCCLIII, 1424; Il Secolo, October 5, 1905, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ B. D., VIII, 25.

¹⁰⁷ A. P. C. D., DCCXXXIV, 12,854.

¹⁰⁸ Giornale d'Italia, September 9, 1906, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Lister to Grey, May 21, 1906, B. D., III, 355-356.

quently with some slight changes in phraseology,¹¹⁰ agreements were reached in December 1906.

The first of these had as its object the regulation of the arms traffic so that only Emperor Menelik would get guns.¹¹¹ The other and the more important provided that existing treaties should be used as a basis for the preservation of the *status quo*. All three powers were to observe neutrality in case civil war broke out. The interests of the three powers were described as lying in the hinterland of their neighboring possessions. But the Italians laid claim to a territorial connection west of Addis Abeba, and the French claimed specially the railway zone to Addis Abeba. The Addis Abeba railway board was to have French, Italian, British and Abyssinian members and similar arrangements were forecast for any railways which might be built under Italian or British auspices.¹¹²

The reception of these treaties in Italy was not cordial. "XXX" pointed out that Italy could have made a better deal if England and France had not been so amorous towards each other.¹¹³ De Marinis complained that Italian interests had been damaged by subjecting railway construction to international consent,¹¹⁴ and Santini agreed in this by pointing out that the agreement ended the idea of railways to Abyssinia from Massowa or Assab.¹¹⁵ Tittoni pointed out that France and England did not need Italy to agree over Abyssinia.¹¹⁶ In brief, "XXX" struck the note when he said that acceptance was the only thing for Italy. Perhaps she could hope for a better day.¹¹⁷

During these tedious negotiations concerning the Congo, Somaliland, Eritrea and Abyssinia it thus became evident

¹¹⁰ A. P. C. D., DCCXXXIV, 12,854-12,857.

¹¹¹ A. P. C. D., DCCXII, documenti, no. 46.

¹¹² Ibid., no. 45.

¹¹³ "XXX," "Fine d'anno internazionale," Nuova antologia (Series IV), CXXVI (1906), 725.

¹¹⁴ A. P. C. D., DCCXXXIX, 12,839-12,847.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 12,849.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 12,854.

¹¹⁷ "XXX," as cited above, note 114, p. 730.

that the Italians were seeking another future in Africa. They were proceeding much more cautiously and circumspectly than Crispi had done, but still they were marching in the same direction. In Somaliland the results were very gratifying. In the Congo they had not followed England's lead. In Abyssinia and Eritrea they had not hesitated to make their wishes known nor to take what they could get. In this way they laid down precedents and indicated the path which later statesmen were to follow; and they showed the spirit of independence which the *Tribuna* had boasted of in 1902.

CHAPTER XI

ASSERTING AN INTEREST IN THE BALKANS

The main interest of the Italians during the period following 1902 was not in the resurrection of the Crispian dream in Abyssinia. Colonial sentiment, as the agitation regarding Somaliland showed, was not strong enough to dictate the policy of the Italian government. Tripoli, the main object of colonial dreams, had been given another guarantee in July 1902 when the Austrians had yielded their sanction to Italian ambitions there.¹ It was natural then that with friendly relations existing with France and England Italian ambitions should turn eastward.

Albania, Italy's Belgium on the Adriatic, was the main object of anxiety. During 1901, despite efforts to impose silence on the ground that discussion was dangerous to the *status quo*, repeated demands for its autonomy were heard.² The establishment of schools, postoffices and commercial agencies constituted the official side of this interest and aroused suspicion that these were forerunners of more ambitious designs.³ Language riots in the Dual Monarchy testified also to the fact that Italy was turning eastward and to the rise of irredentism.⁴

Circumstances willed it that Macedonia should be the center of activity for this Italian interest. Turkish excesses in this region after 1878 had produced emigration and Bulgarian desires. In the middle of the nineties two Macedonians, Grueff and Delcheff, began the organization of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization by preach-

¹ Pribram, I, 232-233.

² Francesco Guicciardini, "Impressioni d'Albania," Nuova antologia (Series IV), XCIV (1901), 56; A. P. C. D., DCXXII, 4988-4989; Nuova antologia (Series IV), XCIV (1901), 751.

³ Bollettino del ministero degli affari esteri, 1901, pp. 1076-1077; A. P. C. D., DCLXIII, 12,615; Stronge to Lansdowne, August 19, 1901, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 1, 1903, p. 87; Rodd to Lansdowne, January 10, 1903, B. D., IV, 45.

⁴ Nuova antologia (Series IV), XCVI (1901), 384.

Prinetti at first agreed to join representations in support of the Berlin Treaty under the impression that Austria would do likewise;²¹ for the latter objected only to identic communication.²² Nothing was done by either government and early in 1903 Lansdowne sought to reconstitute the Mediterranean group of 1887 by inviting discussion of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean to the tune of a threat that his government might have to reconsider its entire position regarding the Straits.²³ Prinetti was unwilling to incur the hostility of Russia with only British support and sought to keep the discussion going by saying that if Austria fell out he would be willing to exchange views on the Near East.²⁴ Count Goluchowski took the position that the Straits question was of much less importance than that of Macedonia concerning which he had just come to an agreement with Count Lamsdorff.²⁵ Consequently the British protest at Constantinople remained without support.²⁶ Probably consoling themselves with the idea that Russian occupation of Constantinople would not alter materially the strategic situation in the Mediterranean,²⁷ the British allowed the Russians to exult over their success.²⁸

Prinetti's attitude is explained by his determination to be included in any action Russia and Austria might take following their representations to the Sultan during 1902.²⁹ Even the British admitted that his attitude was friendly towards them.³⁰ But he probably felt this was as far as he could go until the situation should become clearer.

²¹ Rodd to Lansdowne, January 9, 1902, B. D., IV, 41-42; G. P., XVIII, 443, footnote.

²² Ibid.

²³ B. D., IV, 41.

²⁴ Rodd to Lansdowne, January 9, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 41-42; Barrère to Delcassé, January 15, 1903, D. D. F. (Series II), III, 33.

²⁵ Plunkett to Lansdowne, January 9, 1903, B. D., IV, 43-44.

²⁶ Bülow to Marschall, December 4, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 442-443; Delcassé to Boutiron, October 18, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 547.

²⁷ B. D., IV, 59; Lee, II, 289-290.

²⁸ Boutiron to Delcassé, January 30, 1903, D. D. F. (Series II), III, 73-74.

²⁹ B. D., V, 49-50; Reverseaux to Delcassé, December 24, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 676.

³⁰ Rodd to Lansdowne, January 10, 1903, B. D., IV, 44-46.

The Vienna project which resulted from the visit Count Lamsdorff had paid to Vienna in December 1902 furnished the necessary if not desired clarification. This measure applied only to three vilayets in Macedonia and dealt mainly with vague recommendations for the reform of the finances and the gendarmerie. Its most important feature from the Italian point of view was that Austria and Russia requested that the Turkish Inspector-General in Macedonia should not be recalled without their consent.³¹ Such might well serve as a basis for priority.

The Vienna project did not touch Lansdowne's desires for Macedonian autonomy and a complete reorganization of the police, justice and finances.³² But he could hardly oppose when he had professed interest in any reforms which Austria and Russia might suggest.³³ The torpedo boat controversy had just revealed England's isolation very clearly. Under these circumstances he masked the discontent he must have felt and simply reserved the right to make future recommendations when he agreed to support the scheme.³⁴

On the other hand Austro-Russian priority did not suit Prinetti. In November 1902 he had proposed that Austria and Italy should agree upon autonomy for Albania under Turkish suzerainty.³⁵ In December Germany, Austria and Russia had opposed his efforts to be included in the preliminary discussions of the Vienna project.³⁶ In January 1903 he invited the Austrians to communicate the project to him prior to its presentation to the Sultan.³⁷ Assurances came from Vienna that Albania was not being considered in these conversations,³⁸ but his uneasiness was revealed in the

³¹ B. D., V, 51-53

³² Hauser, I, 460; Lansdowne to O'Connor, January 9, 1903, B. D., V, 50-51.

³³ Lansdowne to Plunkett, January 6, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 50.

³⁴ Lansdowne to Plunkett, February 17, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

³⁵ Wedel to Bulow, November 2, 1902, G. P., XVIII, 177-179.

³⁶ Bulow to Wedel, December 28, 1902, *ibid.*, p. 217; Wedel to Bülow, January 1, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 220; Reverseaux to Delcassé, December 24, 1902, D. D. F. (Series II), II, 676.

³⁷ Prinetti to Nigra, January 3, 1903, D. D., No. 104, p. 39

³⁸ Prinetti to Nigra, January 10, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 42.

efforts he made to keep up discussions with the British.³⁹ Rodd's recommendations that this should be done were met with the insistence that Italy should support England in the Straits affair.⁴⁰ Consequently German and British support of the Austro-Russians isolated Prinetti.⁴¹

These developments, however, came to a conclusion at a time when Prinetti had been removed from active direction of foreign affairs by a stroke of apoplexy. Admiral Morin, minister *ad interim*, acted in harmony with his probable objections and warned the Austrians that Italy would want to be consulted in case the two governments should request the recall of the Turkish Inspector-General under clause 1 of the Vienna project.⁴² He likewise sought to reach an agreement with Austria about Albania, intimating that it could follow the lines of the same project.⁴³ Count Nigra, Italian ambassador at Vienna, argued that Rome feared an extension of uprisings in Albania to the remaining vilayets, and the strengthening of the Austrian garrison in the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar. His government likewise feared the possible consequences of the Austro-Russian declaration of reserve concerning their future attitude respecting Turkey.⁴⁴ Goluchowski, however, remarked that no Albanian question existed. He had no intention of strengthening the garrison in the Sanjak. If he did, he was within his rights under the Treaty of Berlin. As for Turkey the Sultan's failure to reform would seal his own fate.⁴⁵

The foregoing unsuccessful *démarches* on the part of the Italians were in harmony with a growing uneasiness in Italy concerning the Vienna project. When it was announced, Guicciardini asserted from his seat in the Italian parliament

³⁹ Rodd to Lansdowne, January 10, 1903, B. D., IV, 44-46.

⁴⁰ Idem; Lansdowne to Rodd, January 15, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴¹ Lansdowne to Plunkett, February 17, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 53-54; Lanza to Prinetti, February 17, 1903, D. D., No. 104, p. 48.

⁴² Morin to Nigra, February 18, 1903, D. D., No. 104, p. 50. Prinetti's illness began on January 29, 1903. He retired in April.

⁴³ Richthofen to the Kaiser, April 9, 1903, G. P., XVIII, 251-253; Werfel to Foreign Office, April 29, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 271-272.

⁴⁴ Idem.

⁴⁵ Idem.

that Italy was interested as a signatory of the Treaty of Berlin and on account of her proximity to the region affected. He wanted to know the meaning of the apparent exclusion of Italy from the affairs of the Balkans.⁴⁶ Cirmeni warned that a policy of "clean hands" in case of changes across the Adriatic would imperil the monarchy and the state.⁴⁷ Barrère reported from Rome that seven out of ten Italians refused to believe in the negative character of the Austro-Russian accord.⁴⁸ King Victor Emmanuel agreed with Cirmeni in thinking that the question of Austrian expansion across the Adriatic involved the safety of his dynasty.⁴⁹

But there was little that could be done about it. An approach to Barrère revealed that it was a bad time for the Italians to talk to the Russians concerning the Balkans.⁵⁰ The Austrians became incensed at the interference of the Italians when their fleet went to Saloniki immediately after the insurrectionists had dynamited a bank there.⁵¹ The French ambassador at St. Petersburg advised that French support of Italy would create the danger of a Three Emperors League on Balkan questions.⁵² Suspicions prevailed concerning England. Rumors were afloat in Italian circles early in 1903 to the effect that England had established a coaling station at Bomba on the coast of Tripoli, and that this was connected with the negotiations for a rapprochement between her and France. After some delay official denials concerning the coaling station were given as well as assurances concerning Italy's relations with both France and England.⁵³ Besides, the Italian government differed with England by immediately recognizing King Peter of Serbia.⁵⁴ Italy, in the words of

⁴⁶ A. P. C. D., DCLVI, 5805-5806.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5804.

⁴⁸ Barrère to Delcassé, May 20, 1903, D. D. F. (Series II), III, 339-341.

⁴⁹ Bulow, I, 698.

⁵⁰ Barrère to Delcassé, May 20, 1903, D. D. F. (Series II), III, 339-341.

⁵¹ Reverseaux to Delcassé, May 8, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 302.

⁵² Bompard to Delcassé, June 3, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 371-372.

⁵³ A. P. C. D., DCLVII, 6411-6413, 6524-6525; *Giornale d'Italia*, March 17, 1903, p. 1; *La Tribuna*, March 19, 1903, p. 1.

⁵⁴ As successor to the murdered King Alexander. See B. D., V, 124 ff.; *Mémorial diplomatique*, XLI (1903), 472, 518, 551.

one of her publicists, had too many friends and no firm agreements relating to the Balkans.⁵⁵ Accordingly there was little else done but watch the application of reforms,⁵⁶ send a fleet to Saloniki as a gesture of defiance to Austria,⁵⁷ and support the Vienna project by representations to the Porte.⁵⁸

Circumstances changed rapidly in the fall of 1903. British public opinion became more restive at continued bad conditions in Macedonia.⁵⁹ O'Connor reported that Russia's anger must be braved if England did not want to abdicate her "traditional policy and the responsibility which falls upon us by virtue of past treaties."⁶⁰ At the same time it was becoming apparent that hopes of an Anglo-Russian rapprochement were evanescent in character.⁶¹

Coincidentally with these developments Lansdowne came to the conclusion that it was necessary to broaden the Vienna program.⁶² On September 29, 1903 he brought forward a program providing for the appointment of a disinterested Christian governor or retention of the Mohammedan governor assisted by European assessors, and for immediate reform of the gendarmerie. If these measures were adopted he was willing to let the two powers interested, Austria and Russia, appoint the assessors and, if Turkey would withdraw her irregular troops, would engage to prevent Bulgaria from sending hands across the border.⁶³

The Italians supported this plan vigorously. Russia had eliminated herself as a possible friend of Italy when the Tsar refused to visit Rome in October 1903.⁶⁴ The press was still

⁵⁵ Vico Mantegazza, *Macedonia*, pp. 326-328.

⁵⁶ Baccelli to Malaspina, March 14, 1903, D. D., No. 104, p. 57.

⁵⁷ Alvensleben to Bülow, May 10, 1903, G. P., XVIII, 283.

⁵⁸ Morin to Malaspina, September 15, 1903, D. D., No. 104, p. 80.

⁵⁹ Daily News, September 17 and August 27, 1903; the Times, September 19, 1903. Editorial pages should be referred to in these issues.

⁶⁰ O'Connor to Lansdowne, August 28, 1903, B. D., V, 59-61.

⁶¹ Lansdowne to Spring-Rice, November 17, 1903, B. D., IV, 183-184; Gwynn, *Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice*, I, 366-367.

⁶² Bernstorff to Foreign Office, September 16, 1903, G. P., XVIII, 357-358.

⁶³ Lansdowne to Plunkett, September 29, 1903, B. D., V, 63.

⁶⁴ Bertie to Lansdowne, October 20, 1903, *ibid.*, I, 295.

aroused about possible injury to Italian interests in the Balkans.⁶⁵ Relations with Austria had grown worse during the spring and summer of 1903.⁶⁶ Admiral Morin was trying to internationalize the Macedonian question by suggesting to the Austrian and Russian governments that they should submit the conclusions which they might reach to the Berlin Treaty signatories before they were presented as demands to the Sultan.⁶⁷ In accordance with this idea he supported the British plan enthusiastically, doubtless seeing in England's awakening interest an indication that the days of Austro-Russian monopoly in Macedonia might be of short duration.⁶⁸ Austro-Russian rejection of the plan of prior consultation threw him closer to England and he instructed the ambassador at Constantinople to support the Mürszteg plan in the form that England did, if it should receive the support of all the powers.⁶⁹

The principal features of the Mürszteg plan—which had been elaborated by the Austrian and Russian governments and presented to the Sultan on October 24, 1903—involved the appointment of special agents by Austria and Russia to watch and report on the introduction of Macedonian reforms. A foreign general was to be appointed to command and reorganize the gendarmerie. Upon the restoration of order other reforms were contemplated.⁷⁰ Austrian and Russian priority was thus kept foremost and the indefinite wording made delay in execution inevitable.

Lansdowne was not satisfied with this plan. Its character in his opinion was too restricted.⁷¹ This constituted an opportunity for the Italians. Early in November Senator Tittoni

⁶⁵ *Giornale d'Italia*, August 22, 1903; *Il Secolo*, August 27, 1903; *La Tribuna*, September 13, 1903, p. 1.

⁶⁶ Cilibrizzi, III, 222, 258.

⁶⁷ Morin to Nigra, October 20, 1903, D. D., No. 104, 87-88; Morin to Nigra, October 25, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

⁶⁸ Morin to Nigra, October 20, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁹ Morin to Nigra, October 25, 1903, *ibid.*, pp. 91-92; Morin to Malaspina, October 25, 1903, *ibid.*, p. 92.

⁷⁰ B. D., V, 65-66.

⁷¹ Lansdowne to Plunkett, October 26, 1903, *Parliamentary Papers*, Turkey No. 2, 1904, pp. 99-100.

succeeded Morin at the Foreign Office and in the middle of the month accompanied King Victor Emmanuel on a visit to London. On the same day that Lansdowne grew discouraged over the possibility of reaching an agreement with Russia,⁷² they reached London. As a result of their conversation Italy and England came to an agreement that Tittoni and Lansdowne should work together to maintain the European character of the Macedonian question.⁷³ As might have been expected, this vague and ambiguous statement soon gave rise to differing interpretations.

Lansdowne at once proposed that France should join in common action in case the Macedonian situation should become worse.⁷⁴ He was ready, he remarked in February 1904, to propose a European congress and to advocate autonomy with international control of finance.⁷⁵ Tittoni was ready to support this idea at Berlin, if England did the same at St. Petersburg and Vienna, and France approached the Russians.⁷⁶ Delcassé, however, considered such a plan premature, although he was willing to admit that the reticence of the powers had been a mistaken policy.⁷⁷ Plunkett reported from Vienna that advocacy of autonomy might drive Austria into the hands of Russia,⁷⁸ while Bülow definitely opposed the idea of a congress.⁷⁹ At the same time Tittoni was definitely assured by the Austrians that they had no designs upon Albania and became suspicious that France was sowing discord for her own benefit between Italy and Austria.⁸⁰ Consequently the proposal came to naught.

But internationalization of the Macedonian question did

⁷² Lansdowne to Spring-Rice, November 17, 1903, B. D., IV, 183-184.

⁷³ Carignani to Tittoni, January 14, 1904, D. D., No. 104, p. 125.

⁷⁴ Lansdowne to Monson, February 17, 1904, B. D., V, 67.

⁷⁵ Lansdowne to Monson, February 20, 1904, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69; Lansdowne to Bertie, February 23, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 69.

⁷⁶ Bertie to Lansdowne, February 19, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 68.

⁷⁷ Lansdowne to Monson, February 25, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 70; Monson to Lansdowne, February 26, 1904, *ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

⁷⁸ Plunkett to Lansdowne, February 25, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷⁹ Lascelles to Lansdowne, February 26, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 72; Richt-hofen to Marschall, March 14, 1904, G. P., XXII, 120.

⁸⁰ Bertie to Lansdowne, March 5, 1904, B. D., V, pp. 73-74; February 26, 1904, p. 71.

not rest solely on Lansdowne's proposal for a European congress. It came about in part from cooperation of England and Italy with respect to Macedonian gendarmerie reforms. Lansdowne in December 1903 supported the appointment of an Italian general as commander,⁸¹ as well as Tittoni's proposal that all the powers should contribute an equal number of officers to assist him.⁸² The two powers also acted together in the question of what districts should be assigned the nations participating in the gendarmerie reforms. Tittoni protested strongly against assigning the Austrians to the district around Uskub and Voden, since this was too close to Albania.⁸³ Lansdowne was willing to take his chances with an assignment by lot, but instructed O'Connor to support the Italian position.⁸⁴ France chimed in, the Austrians grew angry,⁸⁵ but Bülow intervened to stop a rising quarrel.⁸⁶ As a consequence Italy secured Monastir as her district.⁸⁷ The Austrians apparently were glad to see Russia excluded from this region,⁸⁸ but made the reservation that if general headquarters of the gendarmerie should ever be placed at Monastir Italy would have to take another district.⁸⁹ France, England and Italy likewise opposed an effort on the part of Austria and Russia to place additional officers in Macedonia⁹⁰ as well as an Austrian scheme to subject the Italian commander of the gendarmerie to Russian and Austrian civil agents.⁹¹ The revelation of this division so encouraged the Sultan to resist a demand for an increased number of officers that Austria and

⁸¹ Pansa to Tittoni, December 7, 1903, D. D., 104, pp. 103 ff.

⁸² Tittoni to Pansa, January 13, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 118; Carignani to Tittoni, January 14, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 125.

⁸³ Tittoni to Pansa, February 14, 1904, *ibid.*, pp. 151-152.

⁸⁴ Pansa to Tittoni, February 17, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 155.

⁸⁵ Wedel to Foreign Office, February 20, 1904, G. P., XVIII, 105.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126, footnote.

⁸⁷ Cangia to Tittoni, April 15, 1904, D. D., No. 104, pp. 205-206.

⁸⁸ Baron Vladimir Giesl, *Zwei Jahrzehnte im Nahen Orient*, p. 141.

⁸⁹ See above, note 87.

⁹⁰ Lansdowne to O'Connor, August 6, 1904, *Parliamentary Papers*, Turkey, No. 4, 1904, p. 216; Tittoni to Pansa, July 11, 1904, D. D., No. 104, p. 218; Tornelli to Tittoni, November 30, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 251.

⁹¹ Lansdowne's memo., August 31, 1904, *ibid.*, p. 239; Tittoni to Pansa et al., August 12, 1904, *ibid.*, pp. 225-226. Giesl denies such an objective. Giesl, 140-146.

Russia appealed for support,⁹² thus keeping the Macedonian reforms international in character.

During this period of negotiations which lasted throughout 1904, England and France had come to their famous understanding of April 10, 1904. This was first tested in the Dogger Bank episode of that fall in which Delcassé exercised a mediatory influence.⁹³ Lansdowne's efforts to conciliate Russia had ceased,⁹⁴ but in this case he had found a powerful intermediary. British public opinion was very much aroused over the lack of progress in Macedonia.⁹⁵ Consideration of the matter led Lansdowne to believe that Austria had no immediate ambitious designs in the Balkans.⁹⁶ Under these circumstances it is not surprising that he became more aggressive at the beginning of 1905.

The Italians, on the other hand, had not watched the Anglo-French rapprochement without some misgivings. When it was consummated Fusinato of the Italian Foreign Office remarked that it deprived Italy of one weapon.⁹⁷ Uneasiness was felt in the Italian Parliament concerning its effect upon Tripoli and the *status quo* in the Mediterranean.⁹⁸ Tittoni merely replied that the Anglo-French accord was a guaranty of peace and gave Italy confidence for the future.⁹⁹ This was not reassuring. The *Giornale d'Italia* became very much excited over the proposed construction of a railroad from Alexandria to Sollum and remarked that any limited negotiation over the western boundary of Egypt could not leave Italy indifferent.¹⁰⁰

It was under such circumstances that Lansdowne determined to act respecting Macedonia. In December 1904 he notified the Austrian and Russian governments that judicial

⁹² Marschall to Foreign Office, December 27, 1904, G. P., XXII, 201.

⁹³ Anderson, pp. 112-113.

⁹⁴ Lee, II, 306.

⁹⁵ Newton, pp. 303-305; Lee, II, 264 ff.

⁹⁶ Newton, p. 305. The neutrality treaty with Russia evidenced this tendency. See Anderson, p. 168.

⁹⁷ Bertie to Lansdowne, April 21, 1904, B. D., III, 17-18.

⁹⁸ A. P. C. D., DCLXIII, 12,541-12,542 ff.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 12,650.

¹⁰⁰ Op. cit., August 27, 1904, p. 3.

and financial reforms were needed.¹⁰¹ In January 1905 he told the French that the time had come for other powers to make their influence felt, although he was willing for Austria and Russia to keep the lead.¹⁰² He proposed that Turkey and Bulgaria should disarm, that the powers should appoint a commission to control financial and judicial matters, and that the reforms should be extended to the vilayet of Adrianople.¹⁰³

The British challenge was not left unnoticed. Complaining that this attitude encouraged the Sultan to resist,¹⁰⁴ Austria and Russia submitted a financial plan by which Macedonian finances were placed under the control of the Ottoman Bank, the Turkish Inspector General and the "powers interested."¹⁰⁵ The Sultan countered with a suggestion for the increase of customs duties and Turkish control of the finances.¹⁰⁶ The British withheld a formal presentation of their proposals in order to give time for Austria and Russia to act,¹⁰⁷ but made it clear that they objected to the financial ability of the agencies selected in the Turkish plan.¹⁰⁸ Despite Mensdorff's statement that if "powers interested" did mean Austria and Russia it would be understood that they were acting as mandatories of the other powers,¹⁰⁹ Lansdowne objected that such a scheme would place the financial affairs of Macedonia in the hands of powers having inferior commercial and financial interests there.¹¹⁰ As for the Turkish plan, he saw no guarantees of the wide use of the funds which would be derived from the increase in customs duties, and demanded an investigation of the

¹⁰¹ Lansdowne to Plunkett, December 20, 1904, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 2, 1905, pp. 88-90.

¹⁰² Lansdowne to Bertie, January 11, 1905, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 3, 1905, pp. 1-3.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Lansdowne to Bertie, February 3, 1905, B. D., V, 77.

¹⁰⁵ Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 3, 1905, pp. 5-10.

¹⁰⁶ Lansdowne to Townley, February 15, 1905, *ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ Lansdowne to Plunkett, February 15, 1905, B. D., V, 78-79.

¹⁰⁸ Lansdowne to Bertie, February 3, 1905, B. D., V, 77.

¹⁰⁹ Lansdowne to Plunkett, February 8, 1905, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 3, 1905, p. 18.

¹¹⁰ Lansdowne to Mensdorff, March 28, 1905, *ibid.*, pp. 80-82.

Turkish financial situation and trade abuses as a *sine qua non* of consideration.¹¹¹ On the other hand, Tittoni was primarily interested in the term "powers interested" and having a minor trade and financial stake was willing to accept a compromise if the term did not mean Austria and Russia alone.¹¹²

Extension of Austro-Russian financial control over Macedonia was thus blocked by the attitude of England and Italy. Delcassé from the beginning had assumed a waiting attitude.¹¹³ Lansdowne admitted that his objections would be lessened if all powers were considered "powers interested."¹¹⁴ Probably as a result of communications from Delcassé the Russians brought pressure to bear on the Austrians.¹¹⁵ At any rate, Cambon, French ambassador at London, notified Lansdowne that the Austrians and Russians were willing to accept the appointment by other powers of financial delegates to assist the civil agents.¹¹⁶ Consequently on May 8, 1905, the powers were able to agree on a note demanding that the Sultan create a financial commission.¹¹⁷ In December a naval demonstration forced the acceptance of this scheme.¹¹⁸

The Italian government played but a minor rôle in these final acts. The Fortis ministry without the backing of Giolitti had no sound parliamentary support. In April 1905 an understanding between Italy and Austria had removed the main incentive for Italian action, which was jealousy of Austria.¹¹⁹ The British ambassador at Rome was temperamentally unfitted to deal with Italians and was handicapped by the personality of his wife.¹²⁰ Very little interest, therefore, was manifested by the Italians in the final stages of the

¹¹¹ Lansdowne's memo., February 27, 1905, *ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

¹¹² Tittoni's aide mémoire, March 3, 1905, D. D., No. 104, p. 282.

¹¹³ Lansdowne to Bertie, February 3, 1905, B. D., V, 77.

¹¹⁴ Lansdowne to Hardinge, March 28, 1905, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 3, 1905, p. 83.

¹¹⁵ Marschall to Foreign Office, April 6, 1905, G. P., XXII, 248.

¹¹⁶ Lansdowne to Bertie, April 5, 1905, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 3, 1905, pp. 86-87.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-166.

¹¹⁸ Documents diplomatiques, affaires de Macédoine, pp. 221-225.

¹¹⁹ Pribram, II, 137-138.

¹²⁰ This information comes from a private source.

program.¹²¹ Internationalization had been achieved and that was enough. In fact Tittoni suggested that he might be able to help the Turks by his influence with Germany if they would accept the demands of the powers in principle.¹²²

The policy of the Italian government throughout the entire crisis from 1903 to the end of 1905 had been largely governed by the desire to check Austria. Their anxiety to work with England waxed and waned in proportion to their uneasiness on this point. After close understanding between England and France made Italian assistance of England less important, they resorted to courting the other side, for example in their acceptance of a compromise financial plan.¹²³ On the other hand, England worked with Italy more readily when France was not available. Still throughout all stages of the crisis Italy was treated in a manner which recognized that the old days of dependence were over.

¹²¹ In October and early November 1905, the Italian government issued no instructions respecting a proposed naval demonstration or upon an extension of the reforms. Lansdowne to Egerton, October 18, 1905, Parliamentary Papers, Turkey No. 1, 1906, p. 59; Egerton to Lansdowne, November 6, 1905, *ibid.*, p. 78.

¹²² Marschall to Foreign Office, November 27, 1905, G. P., XXII, 313-314.

¹²³ See above, note 114.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

One of the great handicaps of the writer who deals with any phase of human history is that he must meet the difficulty which novelists of many years ago dodged most completely. In their masterpieces the villain was defeated or killed in the last chapter. The hero and heroine were left to live happily ever after. The historian has no heroes and villains to deal with; and he knows that he can never say that from this day or year a specific scheme of things has become fixed and immovable.

Dogmatism of any kind is particularly difficult in the description of Italy's international position at any time. Generally a combination of brain and circumstance rather than brawn have been responsible for her triumphs. For the most part these have been achieved—as in the period of the present survey—outside the main channel of European diplomacy. But the Italy of 1905 was more certain in its policy than the one of 1896. During that interval England came to pay greater attention to her wishes. A short review of the facts will be of service in summing up the evidence pointing to her more independent position in European politics.

In 1896 Italy's influence with her legal ally, Germany, and with her moral ally, England, was not strong enough to prevent a moral and military defeat on the fields of Abyssinia. In Tunis she abandoned a hard-fought field to France. The force of circumstances separated her from England in the Sudan. In Crete she found precarious safety as a satellite of England. At Fashoda she did little else but follow a British-flavored neutrality. The disasters of 1899 reaching from Tripoli to San Mun, which were followed by the greatest crisis of her pre-war history, the assassination of King Humbert at Monza, turned the bright dreams of her statesmen of the Risorgimento into horrible nightmares.

In some way Italy found herself after these hours of na-

tional humiliation and disgrace. Understanding nods with France were exchanged on the subject of Morocco and Tripoli. The threat of a Franco-Italian understanding in the Mediterranean wrung concessions from England in Malta and on "the fourth shore of Italy." Recognizing that the position of Italy was improving, her statesmen secured compensation from England in return for cooperation in Somaliland and in answer to the cries of a reviving colonialism. British esteem for her friendship prevented her elimination from the negotiations which terminated in the Abyssinian tripartite treaty of 1906. During the Macedonian troubles of 1903-1905 her statesmen took advantage of British friendship and European jealousies to assert the fact that Italy's interest in the Balkans extended beyond Albania and to establish the idea that she must not be neglected in the settlement of the Near Eastern question. Such formed the natural prelude to the comparatively independent position she was to assume at the Conference of Algeiras.

Progress towards a greater sense of weight in the European world was real. It may not have been as big as a house or broad as a door. But upon the foundations which Italian statesmen laid in their relations with England during this period their successors have built and established their country's position as a great and independent power.

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